RANDOM RHYMES AND VAGRANT THOUGHTS

BY H. C. WILLIAMSON

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H. C. WILLIAMSON

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Random Rhymes

and

Vagrant Thoughts

Caught From Idle Moments
in a Busy Life

By H. C. WILLIAMSON

(Copyrighted, 1918)

To those whom I love and to my friends, this little volume is dedicated by the author

Memphis, Tenn., December, 1918.

GREETING

To Mrs Margaretta Doughtery

Dear Mrs Doughtery

This little book of "Random Rhymes"
For fame makes no contention,
The "vagrant thoughts," herein contained,
Aim not at self laudation.
It does not come in search of praise
And seeks no compensation,
But offered as a simple gift
To keep, or for cremation.
Tho' if, perchance, a word or thought
Is found to halt attention
And help to call some mem'ry back
To pleasant recollection,
Then I will have complete reward
For this confused creation,
And the purpose of my venture
Will find its full fruition.
I have no gift of poesy
And know naught of the muses;
My pen is not inspired to write
Save in most common uses.

While speeding through the years now gone
I've paused sometimes, or halted,
To feast on beauties by the way
That seemed to me exalted;
Responsively, in glad exchange
For my poor attention,
They gave to me impressions, sweet,
For future adulation;
I treasured them as best I could,
But beauty hates seclusion,
They went away, as you can see,
And left me in confusion.
I've often tried to coax them back
To live in my remembrance,
But like my vagrant, rambling thoughts,
They answer me in silence.
I've sought to write some word of praise
Of our sweet Mother Nature,
Or say somewhat of good I've known
About my fellow creature.
And then I dipped my pen in fire,
That burns on Cupid's altar,
And there it was I lost my head
In blind confusion's halter.
By critics, I will be condemned
Because of my pretention,
I've no defense, and will accept
Their judgment, in contrition,
But trust my friends will not review
These crude imperfect pages
With literary critic's eye
Or viewpoint of the sages,

Remember, that they make no claim
For merit's recognition
But simple words from friend to friend
Like friendly conversation.

With all good wishes now
and always, Sincerely
Henry C. Williamson
Mch 2-1919

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PERSEVERANCE

I may not gain success in life
Equal to my neighbor,
I may not have the best reward
For my earnest labor,
Yet I'll labor for it.

I may not think the world is right,
When failure o'ertakes me,
I may not grasp with steady hand,
Problems that confront me,
But I will attempt it.

I may not find that perfect peace
Born of finished duty,
I may not climb the steep ascent,
To a life of beauty,
Yet I will begin it.

The highest ideals of my life
May not be allowed me,
But if to reach them I have tried,
Earnestly, sincerely,
I'll be better for it.

My path may lead me to the shores
Of a turbid ocean,
And on its restless bosom, find
Peril there, my portion,
Yet I'll try to shun it.

I may not win the prize I crave,
Ere my strength shall fail me
I may not reach the goal I seek,
Ere the night o'ertakes me,
Yet I will deserve it.

DAWN

Advancing rays are gleaming
And halting clouds are beaming
With the golden tints of light.
Wild birds are sweetly singing,
Glad melodies are ringing
The retreat of tyrant night.
Flickering stars are fading
And softly grows the shading
As the darkness steals away.
On the floweret cluster
Dewdrops are catching luster
From the heralds of the day.

ONLY A WORD

Only a word, but the lash of its tone
Sent pain to a life through the day,
And the sun looked down on a flower that drooped
And fell on the tearful way.

Only a curl of the lip, as a word
Was uttered, in anger or pride,
But a wound was made, that rankled and hurt,
While a day's peace languished and died.

Only a frown, in the place of a smile,
But it pierced the heart with a sting,
And crucified all the pleasure and peace
That a beautiful day could bring.

Only a deed, that was thoughtlessly done,
But it called for a tearful toll,
And opened the springs of mis'ry and pain,
That flooded, with sorrow, a soul.

Only a word, gently spoken, and soft,
As it came from a heart sincere,
But it rifted clouds and let in the sun
To a life that was cold and drear.

Only a smile, but its radiant glow
Dispelled the deep darkness of night,
From a sunless life, that struggled, in vain.
To gather a gleam of the light.

Only a word, or a smile, or a frown,
If freighted with weal or with woe,
Will sow the fresh seeds of pleasure or pain
In hearts, wherever they go.

BEAUTY

Transcendent beauty, in varied form,
O'er nature, reigns supreme.
E'en from the dark and frowning storm
Scintillant beauties gleam.
On sombre clouds, at gates of day,
In undisturbed repose,
The Master Artist paints the ray,
Its beauty to disclose.
The leaves that tremble in the breeze
Weave robes of beauty rare,
And clothe, in rich array, the trees
God planted everywhere.
The rolling waves on ocean's breast,
The broad expansive land
The star-lit sky, like jeweled crest,
Were all in beauty planned.
In forest depths—on sunlit plain,
Sweet flowers of beauty grow,
We walk in beauty's gorgeous train,
Wherever we may go.

THOUGHTS

Thoughts are the seeds that grow into deeds,
In the soil of love or of hate,
And where they're sown, like fruits will be borne
Obedient to the laws of fate.

Our thoughts may grow into words and go
To the heart of a friend or foe,
With rankling pain and return again
To us, with a burden of woe.

A word may go, and we may not know
What sorrow or cheer it may bear
Along its way, to drive care away,
Or shadow a life with despair.

We may not see the swift tendency
Of thoughts as they speed on their way,
Or words that grow, in love or in woe,
To brighten or darken a day.

We may not know, if the seeds we sow,
Will be born into life anew,
Nor may we see what the fruit will be,
Till the harvesting time is due.

A thought, a word, or a whisper heard
An act or a deed that is done,
May fill with pain, or sweetly sustain,
A life that is struggling alone.

Then sow no seed that you have not freed
From the tares, in word and in thought,
That all you sow, in virtue may grow
Into deeds with gentleness fraught.

TO A SUNBEAM

Beautiful sunbeam, daughter of heaven,
By infinite love to earth thou art given,
From deep gloom of darkness to joyous day,
Thy radiant glory illumines the way.
Thou art resplendence of awak'ning morn,
The soft effulgence of receding sun,
Thou art a rapture of heaven's resolve,
A celestial smile, full pregnant with love.
A song of the soul from the infinite sea;
The joy of a heart imprisoned, set free.
Thou art remembrance of eons far past,
In yon distant worlds thy presence has blest.
A gleam of hope from a glorified star,
A vision of love from bright worlds afar,
Thou art sweet melody's soft whispered sigh,
A blissful dream of the musical sky.
That is thy touch on the full blossomed rose,
Thy splendor on clouds in twilight repose.
Thou art the spirit of the wild bird's trill,
The unspoken thought of the heart's deep thrill,
Onward, forever, with the steeds of dawn,
Thy chariot speeds with the golden morn,
Over the highway of resplendent day,
And into the twilight, flashes thy ray.
The star-jeweled sky, in rich splendor drest,
Awaits thy coming in the luring west.
Dim grows my vision—the shadows steal on—
Darkness envelopes me when thou art gone.
Though dark be the night when thou art away,

The sheen of thy glory with me shall stay.
Thy pathway of light through worlds yet to be,
My footsteps shall guide through eternity.

HOME

More splendid to me than abodes of the great
Or the tapestried halls of content;
Grander than palace of prince or of king,
Is the home where my childhood was spent.
Back to the morning of life's early youth,
My fond recollection, it takes.
Where pure hallowed joys, to me, it revives,
And treasures of thought, it awakes!
"Home" what a treasure of meaning there is
Embraced in that magical word.
What oceans of love are found in its depths,
What pleasure of mem'ry is stirred.
The glamour of fame and the grandeur of wealth
And the glitter of social array
May lead us blindly in pleasure's domain
From the glow of its halo, astray,
For the dear old home though wanting in wealth,
Still clings to the heart that is true,
That honors father and mother, with love,
A memory that ever is new.
Though tempters of gain and pleasure, assail
Though we tread the dark pathways of pain
The heart will turn to the sanctified home
To find its first gladness, again.

COMPENSATION

Dear, tired one, be not cast down
  Because of pain or sorrow,
Where thorns today, are in my crown,
  Sweet roses will bloom tomorrow.
Along life's steep and toilsome way,
  Flowers for thee are growing,
Which gather suntints day by day,
  And bend to night wind's wooing.
The gentlest rays of peaceful light
  Come after darkest sorrow,
The gloom that veils thy heart tonight
  Will pass away tomorrow.
Above dark clouds, the radiant sun
  Is, still, in glory shining,
Passing shadows, seek not to shun,
  They come with life's refining.
From springs of grief, in gladness, flow
  The streams of purest pleasure,
With smiles and tears, with weal and woe
  Is filled love's perfect measure.

SELF-RELIANCE

Trust thyself, every heart vibrates to that iron string.—Emerson.

Trust thyself. 'Tis always best
Whate'er thou hast to do,
'Tis strength for all endeavor,
And food for all that's true.
Trust thyself, it is the lamp
To guide thy feet aright,
When climbing life's steep mountain
In dark misfortune's night.
Trust thyself; be not dismayed,
Where duty calls thee, go,
However fierce the conflict,
However great the foe.
Trust thyself; it is the force
To which obstructions yield;
It is the trusty weapon
The world's great heroes wield.
Trust thyself, immortal youth,
God's world before thee lies.
Go forth in conscious manhood
And win the waiting prize.
Trust thyself and walk erect
With eyes fixed on the stars,
A God-like self-reliance
The strongest gate unbars.
Trust thyself, the radiant sun
Shines not with borrowed light;
Frowning storms do not prevent

The eagle's upward flight.
Trust thyself, the heart vibrates
To self-reliant strings,
Rise, stand forth and spread abroad
The mind's aspiring wings.
Trust thyself, though slave thou be,
Thou art akin to God.
The germ within thee planted
Must bloom above the sod.
Trust thyself, command all light
Thy life's great purpose show
To thee, from springs eternal,
God's provocations flow.
Trust thyself, God in thee lives
And moves to noble ends,
Before his inspiration
The universe unbends.
Trust thyself, thou canst not err,
If thine's a noble aim,
Along the trackless orbits,
Go, thou, and write thy name.
Trust thyself, O, various man,
Thy powers here unfold,
Unchain the Gods within thee
And rise to heights untold.

TODAY

Write this truth on your heart, O youth
If high, in life, is your aim.
Days that are gone will not return;
Tomorrow, you may not claim.
Today, of all the years, is best
A link in eternity's chain
It binds in a bond universal,
The mind's infinite domain.
From all the ages past, it comes,
From the remotest time and place.
From all the kingdoms of the mind
A message from every race.
From all the changing course of years
From the varied ways of life
From all the fields where man has wrought
From scenes of his stress and strife.
From God's eternal throne, it comes
On wings of hope and light.
It bids you with high purpose rise
And soar to wisdom's height.
It comes arrayed in hours of gold
The moments, its jewels are.
Rich were hours of days that are gone
Richer the moment that's here.
Today is burdened with greater wealth
Than day ever brought before
It brings to you the treasures rare
From heaven's abundant store.
It comes, a messenger of love

A guide to the upward way.
Arise, and gird thyself, O! youth
And walk with the passing day.

CONSOLATION

Mourn not, my child, the summer's death,
Shrink not from winter's frosty breath,
Grieve not because the flowers fall,
Transition is the fate of all,
'Tis wisdom's way.

The summer sleeps, it is not dead,
The winter's breath, ye need not dread,
It comes that you may better see
Beauties that Springtime brings to thee
In rich array.

The night always precedes the day,
December prompts the wish for May,
And withered flowers serve to show
Beauty of flowers while they grow
For you and me.

God made the Universe for you,
Its wealth of beauty always new,
From day to day, from year to year,
It ever brings sweet joy and cheer
To thee, to thee.

He made the boundless starry plane
And all of Nature's wide domain,
Mountains here and oceans there
Grand and glorious everywhere.
All, all for thee.

See! the softly dawning light,
From ascending sunbeams bright,

See! the glorious golden tints
Upon the morning clouds, it prints!
'Tis all for thee.

Listen! listen! the joyous song
Of all the happy feathered throng,
Emerging from the gloom of night—
Bathing in the radiant light,
They sing for thee.

Hear the crystal waters keep
Rythmic music while they leap
From rock to rock, from glade to glade,
Along the pathway they have made,
Through ages past.

See! nature has around thee strewn
Riches abundant, all thine own.
Her sweetest music enchants thine ear
And rarest beauty lingers near,
For thee 'twill last.

When from the dark and angry cloud
Comes the voice of thunder loud,
When the blinding lightnings flash,
And the fitful storm winds clash
Be not cast down.

Beyond the clouds, the glorious sun
Still shines, and when the clouds are gone
Its beams of light will gently come
And cheer again the heart's sweet home,
Dear little one.

LIFE

Sometimes the days are dark and drear,
And radiant hours of hope retreat;
Sometimes we tread the aisles of pain,
With sorrow's weary-laden feet;
Sometimes the mists enshroud the sky,
And hide the smiling sun from view.
Sometimes the chilling rains descend
From low'ring clouds of darkest hue.
'Tis then, we learn the priceless worth
Of hours that we've cast away,
Of moments, as they come and go,
And value of the passing day.
'Tis then we think of brighter days
Of golden hours we've called our own
Of moments filled with joy divine
Of pleasure we have loved and known,
And then, we know, though dark the day,
Though the hours are filled with pain,
For some wise purpose they are sent
And sunlit days will come again.

MEMORY

When memory of other days
  Shall cease, beyond restore;
When records of the heart shall be
  Hidden forevermore,
When birds shall cease to love and mate,
  And flowers cease to bloom.
When wintry blasts shall chill the heart
  And spring days cease to come;
When twinkling stars shall cease to shine,
  From vaulted heavens o'er,
And sun and moon, their faces hide
  And love shall be no more;
Then I'll forget the golden days,
  That you and I have seen,
The beauty of the sunlit paths
  Where you and I have been,
When nature shall forget to weave
  Her robes of beauty rare;
When summer shall forget her love,
  And mourning garments wear,
Then I'll forget those happy hours
  The fellowship and cheer
The thrilling ecstasy of life
  I felt when thou wert near.

LOVE'S CONSTANCY

On the distant shores of silence,
Beyond the blending sea and sky,
Yielding to my heart, obedience,
I wait for love's sweet bye and bye.
Though oppressed with silence reigning
Over the sea of distance, wide,
I will wait for sign,unfailing,
That love shall send on swelling tide.
As the mists retreat at dawning,
I will watch for love's sweet token
And in twilight's whispered moaning
I will hear love's words unspoken.
Though the clouds about me hover,
And angry storms around me sweep,
Love's strong hope will, fear dissever
And pierce the tomb of silence deep.
O'er this trackless sea of silence
Words of love may not be spoken,
But my heart will bear allegiance
Through the waiting years, unbroken.
Far across abysmal darkness,
Rising above the misty way,
Love can see in hazy distance
The visions of a blissful day.

THE DESTINY OF MAN

What is thy destiny, O man!
Thou child of Infinity?
What is thy momentous mission here?
What wondrous task commands thy being?
What period will see thy finished work?
Art thou commissioned to ferret out
The hoarded secrets which sage Nature guards?
Dost thou dare tread her sacred halls
Or invade, with pilfering thought,
Her treasure house?
Dost thou attempt to bring
Into pliant solution, the solids of her store?
Dost thou essay to translate, in language
That all may read, the hidden wisdom
Engraved upon her ample scroll?
Art thou a prisoner here until,
This, thy task is done?
And then
Wilt thou pass away and be no more?
Or
Art thou heir to universal domain—
A traveler on the highway of eternity—
Coming from worlds which thou hast conquered,
Destined to worlds yet unexplored.
Even unto the infinite spheres of thy capacity?
Ere thou goest hence,
Thy God-like mind shall guide thee
Unto the mastery of all mystery that vexes thee,
Upon this earth—thy transient home.
Thou shalt lay bare all hidden things therein,

And subject, to thy imperial will,
All secret powers,
And bring, in willing service, unto thee,
All latent forces.
Thou shalt possess the hoarded wealth,
That lies within great Nature's vaults;
Thou shalt subdue and command the hosts
That once thy masters were.
And when
Thou hast conquered all—
Hast earned the wealth and wisdom
Which thy Father, God,
Didst place within thy reach—
When thy mastery here, thou hast proven
By diligence and expansion
Of thy kingly mind.
Then
In other worlds and higher spheres
A grander—nobler work awaits thee.
New problems then, and forces great
Shall, unto thee, meek obedience yield.
And still on
To greater worlds and broader spheres of action
Thy upward course shall be
From worlds to worlds
Through the eternal years
Of God's illimitable universe
Forever and forever.
From smallest atom
To loftiest galaxy of worlds,
From finite to infinite beauty
Flowing from extreme necessity,

From chaos to all-compassing harmony,
Thou shalt see and know
And knowing thou shalt feel
The majesty, goodness and glory
Of thy Creator—God.
And
Along the pathway that leads
To the infinite source of wisdom
Thou shalt gather the fair flowers
Of happiness.
But,
Eternity shall not suffice
To bring thee to its goal.

INDIAN SUMMER

The sultry summer days are gone,
The flaming lamp of day burns low,
Its light grows dim in gath'ring mist,
While languid breezes gently blow.

The fervent heat no longer comes
With ardor, as in days gone by;
Where glowed the live coals yesterday,
Gray ashes, now, in silence lie.

Green carpets of the fields turn pale,
Touched by the chill of frosty days;
The flowers droop, their radiant charm
Grows less, in purple Autumn haze.

Rich colors robe the far-off woods
And linger in the softened light,
To cheer the sad, sweet days that come
And go, before dull winter's night.

The far horizon sinks to sleep,
And winds come with a muffled sound;
Deep silence broods o'er all the land
While dead leaves fall to waiting ground.

The dying year seems, now, to halt,
And softly breathe, in peaceful rest;
The silenced birds flit here and there,
As if by some sweet loss opprest.

Dear memories of the long ago,
Come back to us from shadows, deep,
And friends from out the silent past
Greet us while nature falls asleep.

We pour libations from the heart
To loves of unforgotten days,
And light the fires of hope and faith
In Wisdom's all-sufficient ways.

It is the time when sober thoughts
Prompt us to offer earnest praise
To Him, who marks, with love, the way
Through all life's Indian summer days.

HELEN OF MEMPHIS

Her form is like the chiseled dream
  Of masters, who have lived, and wrought
Conceptions, of the regal mind,
  By Heaven's inspiration taught.

Her hair is like the glist'ning sheen,
  Inwoven by the loom of dawn,
With lust'rous hues of softened light
  That flood the earth at infant morn.

Her eyes are like the radiant stars,
  That dwell in yon ethereal dome,
And catch the beams of flaming orbs
  That through celestial empires roam.

Her lips are like the budding rose,
  Touched by sweet freshness of the dew,
When, from the resurrected day,
  Life and beauty are born, anew.

Her cheeks are like the lily's bloom,
  Arrayed in Nature's charming grace,
Responsive to the wooing rays
  From highways of unmeasured space.

Her voice is like soft music's song
  That fills the soul in twilight's glow,
When whispered harmony is heard
  In gentle sounds that come and go.

LIFE IS WHAT WE MAKE IT

Search the days, as they come to you,
And you shall find that they contain
More of sweetness than of sadness,
More of sunshine than of rain.

Seek joy and you'll surely find it,
Where sorrow lately held full sway,
None may hinder when you gather
Thorns or roses along the way.

Life is ever what we make it,
Within us, pleasing motives strive,
But neglected, weeds of sorrow
Will grow up in their place and thrive.

Fear not when dark clouds assemble
Between you and the radiant sun,
They are only vapors, passing
And light will come when they are gone.

Even when the gloom is deepest
And haunted by malignant fears
There'll be ling'ring somewhere near you,
More of laughter than of tears.

TRUST

What other realms my soul has known, I do not know,
Or when, my mem'ry tells me not.
In what form of being, in other worlds, I've lived,
Or what achievements, there, I wrought,
I cannot tell; I only know, from out the dark,
God's hand has led me forth to light—
From out of the hidden past. It has guided me
Through the corridors of the night.
Through the shifting scenes of the now, it guides me still,
Along the new, untrodden way
That leads through light and shadow to another dawn,
And promise of a brighter day.
I know not what the past has been, or whence I came,
I know not what awaits me there,
Beyond the coming night, through which my pathway leads,
But this I know, I shall not fear,
The hand that lead me forth, from out of darkness gone,
To the riches and beauty here,
Will lead me through the night, up to another dawn,
And all the richer beauties there.

IF WE KNEW

If we could look into hearts and see
Some little part of the records there,
We might not condemn what seems to be,
Or judge our neighbors by looks they wear.
If we could look into hearts and know
The things that hurt—the things that are feared
And watch the streams of sorrow that flow,
From wounds that come from the unkind word;
The hidden pain that presses so hard
On the soul that cries "O God, how long?"
Perhaps we'd repent the word we said,
Or pity the act we thought was wrong.
If we could know the motives that cause
The word or the deed we hear or see,
We might find that it were well to pause
And ask if we know what seems to be.
Sometimes we might find the motives good,
Whence came a deed we thought was wrong,
Or a fallen comrade who had stood
Till now, and bravely tried to be strong.
Do we know how often the man we spurn
Has fallen before temptation's spear?
And if we knew, could we meanly turn
And leave him there as a thing to fear?
If we knew how bravely he tried to stand,
How nobly the right he tried to do,
We would not withhold the honest hand,
We'd help him up, if we only knew.
If we knew the strong temptations, all,

That beset the path that woman trod,
The love or the want that caused her fall,
In the sight of man, but not of God
If we knew and felt the poignant shame,
She feels as, homeless, she walks the street
Midst jeers of the crowd, with hopeless aim.
Would we turn and guide her guideless feet?
Could we feel it right to turn away
And leave her there in that bitter hell?
Or would it be wrong to point the way
Up to the heaven from which she fell?
How often the weight of deep despair
Presses upon those, weary and weak,
While none are near their burdens to share;
And none, through kindness, a word to speak.
Think of the girl or the boy last night
Who walked alone on the wicked street!
O! had we but known, and tried, we might
Have turned them from the hellish retreat!
Had some strong hand but guided aright,
The wandering feet of the homeless lad,
He would not, now, wear the prison's blight,
Nor, by us, be deemed so wholly bad.
Reproach of the girl would not have stared,
Now, from the depths of her sightless eyes,
If some kind heart her sorrow had shared
Smiles would have played where the death mark lies.
There are brave hearts that try to be true,
Hearts that are sad and striving alone,
Hearts that recall sweet flowers that grew

And bloomed with hope in days that are gone.
There are pure hearts we'll miss bye and bye,
Hearts that yearn for the words we may say.
Weary hearts, we may help if we try
To cheer them with sweet gladness today.
Useless, will be regrets, and in vain,
If our duty we fail, now, to do.
The hour that's here will not come again,
Our debt to the passing day is due.

SELF-ADJUSTMENT

Rest is not in idle dreaming,
While speeding days the years pursue,
But in doing—not in seeming
A part, to build your world anew.

Peace is not in self, retreating,
While clouds o'erspread a brother's way,
But when, with a kindly greeting,
You point him to a better day.

Pleasure is not self-indulgence,
While want is at your neighbor's door,
But in sharing your abundance,
When God sends unto you his poor.

Happiness is not in gaining
Desires, beyond your fellowman,
But in seeking and attaining
Your place in God's eternal plan.

THE BEST REWARD

What need we care when the world goes wrong,
And night envelopes the day,
When storm clouds come with darkness and gloom
And enemies hedge our way?
What if the stones 'neath our feet are sharp,
And the path is rough and steep?
What if vandals gather where we sow,
If love's rich harvest we reap?

What if we strive through the days and years,
Buoyed by the hope of reward,
And find at the end of toil and pain,
That greed, our earnings have shared?
What, though we find that all has been lost,
And vain has been the contest?
We can smile if those we love shall say,
"We know you have done your best."

The toils of life and its burdens great,
And sorrows that come each day,
We may not mind, nor need we complain,
When the clear blue sky turns gray,
If we but hear, when the day is done,
And to home we wend our way,
A whisper of love that says, "I know
You have done your best today."

The heart hears naught that the world may say
Nor sees the sky's dark'ning hue,
When light comes down through rifts in the clouds

From love that's constant and true;
It cares not for wealth's bright golden train,
Nor the heights of tow'ring fame,
If the fires of love, by words and deeds,
On its hearth, are kept aflame.

A LIFE MISSION

Far away from trodden pathway,
Hidden in a lonely dell,
Where the sunbeams rarely entered,
Where no glist'ning dewdrops fell,

Shrinking in a sunless bower,
Trembling in the fitful breeze,
Op'ning unto rarest beauty
'Neath the shadow of the trees,

Smiled a modest, tiny flower
In its gloomy home of night;
Smiled up through the dark'ning shadows,
Catching tints of far-off light.

O'er this tiny flower towering,
Giant trees, in selfish greed,
Gathered the descending sunbeams,
Listing not the flower's need.

Though the haughty branches reveled,
In the radiant sunbeams, bright,
Down where dwelt this little flower
There was, scarce, a ray of light.

From the grandeur of the forest,
O'er the hills and dales around
From the great, strong trees there standing,
Deeply rooted in the ground,

Turned, I, to the tiny flower,
Looked into its smiling face,
Thus I asked this little flower,
'Love you, this dark, lonely place?'

'Why stay here, so far away,
In this sunless dell, alone?'
Answ'ring sweetly, said the flower,
'Thus the Master's will is done'—

'In the fields where sunlight lingers
Where the greater flowers bloom,
Where the glist'ning dewdrops shimmer,
There would be, for me, no room.'

'Passing there you would not notice,
Such a little thing as I,
Here the trees grow in their splendor,
Reaching up toward the sky.'

'But in all their strength and glory
They produce no flower bloom,
Though they gather all the sunbeams,
They distill no sweet perfume.'

'Though I sit within their shadows
Down here in this lonely glen,
You can see upon my petals,
Suntints I've caught now and then.'

'See you not this tangled forest,
See you not my mission's here,

Where there are no other flowers,
  Where no killing frost is near?

'Here I bring forth seed for ages,
  In the distant years to come,
Here I hide them in the forest,
  'Till they find their perfect home.'

'Here I am a little flower,
  In great nature's perfect plan,
For I'm here to plant the outposts,
  In the flower army's van.'

'Where the myriad flowers, growing
  In the pathway of the plow,
Once there grew the tangled forest,
  As here, it is growing now.'

'Then it was, that lonely flowers
  Planted there the waiting seed,
Now responding to the sunlight
  Now from prison life are freed'

'From their graves, are resurrected
  Clothed in beauty's radiant dress
Catching sunbeams in their glory
  Living, giving happiness.'

DUTY

Through the moments and the hours
Live with your God-given powers,
Let your life reflect its beauty
In the crystal stream of duty.
Cast away base habit's burden,
Vest thyself with virtue's guerdon.
Faith and honor, keep thou ever
From truth's highway turn thou, never.
Cleave to that which leads you onward;
Spurn whatever draws you downward,
Let no sentiment enthrall you,
Let not love of gain enslave you.
Smooth life's pathway for another,
Stoop to lift a fallen brother.

KEEP AGOIN'

If the day is sorter cloudy
An' is lookin' kind o' drear,
If the atmosphere is misty,
Keep your courage till it's clear.
If things don't come 'roun' to suit you
An' your hope seems 'bout to die,
Don't begin to fret and grumble,
They'll be brighter bye and bye.
If the road is long and rocky,
An' the hill is hard to climb,
Don't give up, jus' keep agoin'
Sort o' singin' all the time.
If when you've been up and doin'
Your chances, still, seem kind o' slim,
Don't sit down and go to broodin',
Go ahead and try ag'in.
If your luck seems 'bout to leave you,
When you've done your level best,
Don't be pessimistic 'bout it,
Mopin' 'round and look distressed.
No matter if the day is cloudy,
An' the sun is hid from sight,
Growlin' won't turn clouds to sunshine,
An' frettin' never wins a fight.
What's the use of being gloomy
Jus' 'cause things don't come your way?
S'pose your prospects kind o' laggin'
They'll look up another day.
Frettin', grumblin', fumin', fussin',
Never made a better day,

Nothin' ever was accomplished
In a hesitatin' way.
If you want to win the battle,
Go ahead into the fight,
Don't begin to find excuses,
Push along with all your might.
If you want the best that's goin'
You can get it if you try,
Tain't no fault of God a'mighty
If the good things pass you by—
If you want the clouds to leave you
And the sun to shine ag'in,
Keep a smilin', kind o' cheerful,
An' 'twill soon be comin' in.

GOD'S MASTERPIECE

If I'd not known her charming grace
Nor seen the smiles upon her face,
I would admit that flowers rare,
Of beauty owned a rightful share.
Before I heard her silv'ry voice,
In music's charm I could rejoice,
Since then there is no other sound
By which my heart and soul are bound.
In other days I've watched the glow
Of sunbeams on the cloudlets grow;
I've seen the paintings on the rose
And tints, the autumn leaves disclose.
I've sat beneath the moonbeams, bright,
And caught the smiles of stars, at night;
I have seen the advancing dawn
Unfolding beauties, one by one,
In all the world of sight and sound,
God's splendid handiwork I've found.
Through days and years, where'er I've been,
Grace and beauty I've always seen,
But since I saw her glorious face,
All—all of these are commonplace.
In Nature's realm, my tributes cease,
In presence of God's masterpiece.

ASPIRATION

Immortal man, art thou content
To live, to breathe—a dormant soul?
Art thou akin to God—and yet
Seest not on yonder heights thy goal?
Why dost thou sleep when all around
God's active forces are at work?
In all of his wide universe
No atom dares its duty shirk.
If thou wouldst live—if thou wouldst rise
Above the dead and buried past
Thy part in life thou must perform
Must use the talent which thou hast
Whether 'tis one—or five or ten,
Thy duty here is still the same.
The coral builds great continents!
Shall thine be less a noble aim?
Behold in yon infinite space,
The active spheres of living worlds.
If one of these should cease to move,
To quick destruction 'twould be hurled.
From planet's grand and stately march
In harmony and happiness,
To that which fills the smallest place,
There is no room for idleness.
The law of progress that prevails
Above—beneath, around us all
Moves, by its high uplifting course
To higher planes—the great and small.
In Nature's realms, no leaf or limb
Against o'erruling law rebels;

Each part for all and all for each,
The highest good, for all, compels.
Be not content to live beneath
The purpose God created thee!
Awake! arise and stand erect—
Shake off the chains that shackle thee,
In conscious manhood walk thou forth!
Self-trust thy prison gate unbars,
Resolve, henceforth, to climb the way
That leads thy footsteps to the stars.

THINGS I LOVE

I love the fields and wooded dells,
The sunlit clouds o'erhead.
I love the charming hills and vales,
With grass and flowers o'erspread,

I love the craggy mountainside,
Where Nature's children play;
Where breezes come from scented groves,
And drive life's cares away.

I love to hear the water's song
The song that it sings to me,
As 'neath the trees; along its way
It hurries on to the sea.

I love to stand on mountain crest
And worship the starlit dome,
In lonely glens—where flowers bloom
It is there I love to roam.

I love to sit in forest depths
And watch the beautiful leaves,
Gracefully dance to music of birds,
In rapt embrace of the breeze.

I love to stay where wild things grow
Where the birds sing all the day,
Far away from the haunts of men
'Midst trees, where the sunbeams play.

I love to see the sunset's glow,
To look again and again,
At tints of glory penciled there
On the clouds that close it in.

I love to watch the shadows grow
As the twilight moments come;
I love to see the smiling stars
Peep out of the vaulted dome.

I love to rest in Nature's lap,
Out on the carpeted sod,
While speeds my soul from star to star
Through the city of its God.

I love to welcome back again,
My soul from its flights above,
When songs of praise it sings to me,
Of th' infinite God of love.

THE STORM

Infant day awakens, with peaceful, smiling face,
Wearing matchless garments of splendor and of grace!
The stars are disappearing, hiding one by one,
From the golden glories of the ascending sun.
Roving clouds, assuming fantastic shapes at dawn,
Catch the speeding sunbeams and robes of day adorn.
Forests, in their glory, the morning lights receive,
And robes of rarest beauty, diligently weave.
Flowers sweetly smiling above the dewy sod,
Gather varied suntints from the hands of God.
The rippling, crystal waters, laughing in their glee,
Hurry, along their pathways, to the waiting sea;
Birds, in glad contentment, the fields and forests throng,
Filling up the morning, with sweet, melodious song.
Shafts of golden sunlight, shooting athwart the sky,
Glisten on the landscape from vale to mountain high.
Gentle winds are laden with fragrant odors, rare,
The breath of sweetest flowers, blooming everywhere.
High and higher upward, the lamp of day ascends,
And from his fervent flame, the swelt'ring heat descends.
'Tis past the noontide hour, nature is hushed and still—
An ominous silence steals over vale and hill,
Breaking on the stillness, that spreads from shore to shore,

Comes from out the distance, the muffled thunder's roar;
The leaves begin to tremble in the stiff'ning breeze,
And birds, in fear, are flitting through the restless trees.
Louder grows the warning, as winds come swiftly on,
And, sombre clouds, uprising, veil the blazing sun.
Deep'ning gloom approaches and fiery lightnings flash,
And the gathering winds, o'er fields and forest dash;
High, above horizon, the clouds in anger rise,
While the roaring thunder is belched from dark'ning skies.
The wind, in savage fury, drives the blinding rain
In torrents, from the fountains that hover o'er the main.
And, rushing on the forest, quiv'ring in its fright,
Scatters devastation with its resistless might.
Torn from their anchored roots, the sturdy trees are prone,
Upon the trembling earth, in quick expiring moan.
Limbs from trunks are severed and hurled in swirling air
Crash on crash succeeding—destruction everywhere.
Surviving trees, deep wounded, rock and sway in pain,
While shocks of thunder seem to rend the earth in twain;
On in maddened fury, and lightning's fearful flash,
Over vale and mountain, with terrifying clash.
The unfettered tempest sweeps the mainland o'er,
Carrying death and terror to the ocean's shore.

The bosom of the ocean heaves with turbid fear,
As the fiery heralds, from coming clouds, appear.
Surging billows, rising, toward the low'ring skies,
Hurl defiant challenge and gage of battle tries.
The storm wind's shriek is mingled with the thunder's roar,
And forked lightnings flash along the swelling shore
In serried ranks, the billows, to the combat flies,
Engaging the invader with sullen battle cries,
From the raging tempest, the living thunders leap,
And shafts of livid lightning pierce the mighty deep.
The maddened billows, roaring, on the battle plain,
Fight with hellish fury, the victory to gain.
Like a monster demon, belching streams of fire,
The blackened clouds, with vengeance, hurl their lurid ire,
The great, white-crested army, of the raging sea,
Stirred from depth to surface, defies the enemy.
Waves on waves, uprising, with high, increasing rage,
And unrelenting fury, the direful combat wage.
Back, the winds are driven, weaker grows the fight—
Flash the lightnings slowly, with a fainter light.
The unyielding ocean—with the conq'rer's sway,
Holds the scene of battle, the clouds retreat away.
In the length'ning distance, defeated thunders moan,
Like a dying monster, with life's departing groan.
The darkness now recedes, and shadows pass away—
The hidden sun appears—bringing back the day.
Swiftly down the valleys, the fallen waters flow,

While sleeping waves are resting in the ev'ning
glow,
The sun is slowly sinking and remnant clouds repose,
Peacefully reflecting, the summer ev'ning's close.
Gently comes the twilight, of the declining day,
Rest and peace vouchsafing—the storm has passed
away.

ADRIENNE

The earth may tremble and seas divide,
And the moon, her silvery light may hide;
The skies may weep and the north winds blow,
But love for thee, in my heart, will grow,
Adrienne, loved Adrienne.

Sunbeams may pause and the stars grow pale,
And clouds sweep down on wings of the gale;
Dread storms may rage and tempests shrill,
And, yet, I will love thee, love thee still,
Adrienne, dear Adrienne.

The fateful years, as they pass on by,
May bury the hopes of youth that die;
But the loss of these I shall not dread,
If, then, I may own thy love, instead,
Adrienne, sweet Adrienne.

Content, I'll be to know thou art near—
To share thy world and to breathe thy air,
Though I may not hear thy gentle voice,
In thy sweet love I'll ever rejoice,
Adrienne, my Adrienne.

THE MAN WORTH WHILE

The man worth while, is the man who bears
His troubles with never a moan,
And willingly helps his neighbor along
While struggling 'gainst odds of his own;
Nor worries nor frets, when the world goes wrong,
And troubles come thick in his way,
But tries, with a smile and a stouter heart,
The promise of another day.
When clouds hover low, he turns his face
In search of the sun, with a smile,
And his strong arm wrests success from defeat,
As he sings and achieves the while.
When the castles of hope fall down at his feet
And do not instantly rise,
He goes forth again, sustained by a smile,
In swift pursuit of the prize.
When sore disappointment darkens his way,
And everything seems to go wrong,
He finds it is best to stop just a while
And pick up the threads of a song.
Follies and faults, in his neighbor, he sees,
Are reflections but of his own,
And the peace of life, that he most desires,
He can find in his heart, alone.
When the day is done and the balances drawn,
Showing him the loss and the gain,
He finds that the gems of reward have come
From out the dark channels of pain.

VIRGINIA

When lustrous day comes forth from night,
The hills are clothed in splendor bright,
And fields are rich with golden light,
Nowhere as in Virginia.

Nowhere does life seem quite so sweet,
As, when dewdrops and sunbeams meet
And joyful birds their love-mates greet
At sunrise in Virginia.

The clouds seen from the mountain crest,
As twilight gathers in the west,
Are, nowhere else, so richly drest
As they are in Virginia.

Nowhere do purer waters flow,
Nowhere do softer twilights glow,
Or gentler breezes ever blow
Than they do in Virginia.

Nowhere does liquid beauty leap
From sunlit heights, to gorges deep,
Down where the mists make flowers weep,
Just as in old Virginia.

Nowhere does nature's busy loom
Weave flowers with so rich a bloom,
Or fill the air with sweet perfume
As in dear old Virginia.

The fruits that grow on vine and tree,
From mountain slopes to shores of sea.
In all the world, it seems to me,
Are best in old Virginia.

The sun, in its diurnal race,
Shines not upon a fairer face
Than her's, who walks with queenly grace,
The daughters of Virginia.

No mothers, anywhere on earth,
E'er trained a nobler race, from birth,
And sent it forth from purer hearth
Than mothers of Virginia.

Nowhere beneath the clear blue skies,
Do men to higher virtues rise,
Or measure to a nobler size,
Than men in old Virginia.

No land, where salt seas wash the shore,
Or mountains rise, in grandeur, o'er
The valleys, e'er such patriots bore,
As patriots in Virginia.

Her Statesmen, Soldiers, glorious men!
In every place, wherever seen,
The peers of all, have ever been,
When serving old Virginia.

In all that's great, her victory
Has been complete; no mystery
Or shame, blots the fair history
Of noble old Virginia.

Thy bright star, proud mother of States
Shines upon the heavenly gates,
And, there thy gentle spirit waits,
To welcome true Virginians.

TOM CRENSHAW

You reckerlec Tom Crenshaw, pard,
  Back yonder befo' the war?
Tom was a fiddler, then, you know,
  An' he played without er flaw.
He didn't know so many tunes
  As fiddlers know ter-day
But what he knowed, he knowed, you bet,
  An' them, he sho' could play!
I hadn't heard no brass horns, then,
  Like some of the other boys,
And hadn't heard them foreign folks
  Give out their pianner noise.
Thar was four pieces Tom would play
  At all the country dances,
When all the gals and boys would meet
  In s'arch of courtin' chances.
"Ole Dan Tucker" was one of them,
  An' "Rye Straw" was ernother,
"Susanna Don't You Cry" was one
  An' I fergit the other.
Tom never failed ter be on time
  Fer supper befo' the dance,
Though twenty miles he had ter walk,
  Ter miss it, he took no chance.
But when he took that fiddle out
  Ov the bag he kep' it in
An' rubbed the rosin on the bow,
  He was ready ter begin
An' when he tuned her up jest right
  An' drawed his bow across her,

His head drooped down and eyes half shet,
The music 'gun ter whimper,
The gals an' boys from far and near
Would come with the settin' sun,
An' timid-like, jes' stan' eroun'
Fer Tom ter begin the fun.
"Git yo' pardners" then he'd begin
With "Rye Straw" fer er starter,
"Balance all" an' Lo'd a mussy,
How the brogans would clatter.
"Swing yo' pardners, step up lively,"
The fiddle still er talkin'
"Now first couple down the center
An' do some fancy walkin'."
An' then he'd add some extra teches
With "Susanna Don't You Cry."
"First an' second couples balance"
An' the dust would fairly fly.
There wern't no hobble skirts them days,
An' the girls had no false ha'r,
The'r heads an' feet wer' free ter move
An' they moved as light as a'r.
"First fo' for'ard an' back ergin
"Each gent salute his lady,
"Swing yo' corners roun' an' roun'
"Now second fo' git ready."
"Han's eroun' thar in er circle
"An' ev'rybody file in
"Double quick an' move up lively
"An' ladies, keep er smilin' "
That fiddle jes' kep' on er talkin'
'Bout "Rye Straw" an' "Dan Tucker"

How he got drunk an' burnt his shins
Like er darned ole sucker.
Er dozen times er more he'd play
Them tunes from start ter endin';
An' never stop that fiddle once
'Cept when she needed mendin'.
"'Seat yo' pardners" then he'd tell 'em
An' h'd begin repa'rin'
But when he'd fin' the job was tough
He'd jes' let out er sw'arin'
Yes, pardner, them was good ole times
That none since has been like ter,
We didn't know ther' was er world
Like this here we have come ter,
We lived back thar in paridise
With nacher as God made it
An' breathed the a'r that come ter us
In health an' strength an' spirit.
That was befo' the time when men
Went mad erbout the dollar
An' went ter buildin' towns an' things
An' others 'gan ter foller.
Then comes them cussed railroad trains
Er runnin' here an' yonder
An' all the boys I used ter know
Began to rove and wander.
But now an' then one would come back
With pockets full er money,
All dressed up in new store clo'es
An' lookin' mighty tony.
An' then the boys that stayed at home
Would want ter go do like 'em

An' one by one they went erway
  An' lef' the gals behind' 'em.
Now I can count upon one han'
  All them that wasn't tempted
Ter foller them thar railroad tracks
  An' leave the old homes emptied.
But I am here almos' erlone
  With what I can remember,
An' here I'll stay until I go
  Where Tom an' others slumber.

ADVICE TO A COUNTRY BOY

Yes, a country life, I know, 'tis said, is commonplace
And country lads are hampered in life's contending race—
That the city is the place where stalwart men are made,
In the whirl of real action, with money and with trade.
The wonders of the city are told in the city press
And much that is related, the farmer boys impress.
They are told a city man can sleep 'till nine or ten,
Spend an hour or more at noon with his cigar and when
His daily work is ended at four o'clock or five,
He gets into his auto car and takes a pleasant drive.
And, at six or eight o'clock he eats again, and drinks,
Smokes awhile in silent thought, and thinks, and thinks and thinks.
Whether he shall meet his friends down at the social club,
See the play, or stay at home, to him is oft the rub,
Though what place his time commands, we need not here inquire.
His luxuriant life of ease, and satisfied desire,
Stirs envy in the boy who lives out on the farm,
Who sees in the city lord no element of harm.
Listen, to me, now, my boy, you with youth's hope elate,
You, who walk in nature's paths, and now bemoan your fate.

Know, the City's glitt'ring charms, are only siren's songs,
Where the ease, that lures you, in pleasure's mask belongs.
The best and the greatest men that your God ever made
Found their strength at nature's breast to climb high manhood's grade.
Nature does not tempt you, son, except in paths of right
That lead your footsteps upward to stars of living light.
The stores of her nectared wine, no fermentation hide,
But from ever living springs, her crystal waters glide,
Giving all her children life, in amplitude, each day,
And whomsoever thirsts may drink along life's earnest way.
He who dwells in sunlit fields, the rarest beauty sees,
And he feels the wooing touch that comes on fragrant breeze.
The ever changing forms of her splendor and her grace,
Are the radiant smiles that wreathe sweet Mother Nature's face.
Prompting you to highest aims and courage in the strife,
As you seek her promised goal of an exalted life.
There may be more gold, my boy, found in the city's vaults,

And you may think the country has sore and grievous faults.
It measures not its wealth, lad, with currency of gold,
But with uplifting virtues its days and years unfold.
The city is the place, my boy, that men of greed have made
A scar on sweet nature's face, placed there by slavish trade,
Where passion for amassing wealth oft stifle thoughts of right
And temptations there arrayed your high impulses fight.
Love departs in pleasure's whirl and passion reigns supreme,
In the realms of vaulting pride, where gold and diamonds gleam.
While the virtues of the soul, neglected, droop and die,
Peace is bartered for the husks that gold and silver buy.
'Tis hard to escape the vice found in the city's realm
And to guide your craft aright, though you are at its helm.
Ofttimes the door of your heart may be left just ajar,
When vandals will find entrance and its sacred virtues mar.
He who leaves a country life, for crowded marts of trade

Surrenders, oft, the virtues by which great men are made.
Gain of gold, is small, my boy, when measured by the rule
Of the wealth that may be earned in Mother Nature's school.

DESPAIR

I am here in a desolate prison,
A prison unspeakably cold,
In the midst of a tongueless silence,
Where the heart's love never is told.
The dust of a past that is fading,
Sifts down through the darkness and gloom,
And never a sunbeam of kindness
Dispels the dark night of my doom.
Out on the wide ocean of freedom,
The sunlight of charity falls
While here, in a dungeon of sadness,
I grope in compassionless halls.
Beyond the closed shutters of silence,
The breezes of happiness blow
But, here, in abjection, I wander,
Where the tears of misery flow,
In this prison of sorrow, I'm treading,
On hopes of my youth, lying there,
And my heart is throbbing and aching
While I feed on the husks of despair.
The flowers of life's sweet elation
That grew in the beautiful yore,
Are withered and falling and dying
To blossom for me, nevermore.

MAN

Man! thou masterpiece of God's creation!
Thou heaven-endowed—of mind infinite!
Thou custodian of thy Creator's image!
Whence did thou come?
What realm immortal claimest thy nativity?
What honored spot of earth first kissed thy feet?
And felt thy mighty tread?
In what distant age didst thou journey
From thy native home in far off worlds
And come to dwell on this atom of the universe?
Who planted here the seed from which
Thy mighty race did spring and grow
High over all God-created things?
Who among thy philosophers, Profound,
Can reason back from effects to cause
And point to thy origin?
Who can dispel the darkness that
Enshrouds thy birth or
Lift the veil that hides thine infancy
From mortal gaze?
Who can trace to parent source
Thy quickened sense, or fledging wings of thought?
Who can point unerringly
To the dawning gleams of thine intellect
Which guided thy way up from darkness unto light?
Canst thou, wise master,
Who drawest inspiration from sources
Eternal and divine, say, in very truth,
That thou knowest whence, how and when
Came God's regal provocation unto man

To be and do?
Canst thou trace the first illuminating spark of knowledge
Which gave guiding light unto his mind?
Canst thou, who dost delve in buried ruins
Of ages past and races extinct,
Give undimmed light upon the source
Whence flows the stream upon which man rides
To broad and broader spheres of wisdom?
Canst thou, patient historian, descend
The graded centuries of the Past,
Along which man has climbed, until
Truth shall say, "The first is found?"
If thou canst not say, in very truth, that
Thou hast rent the veil
And beheld with wisdom clear,
The origin of thy race—the first faint ray
Of rising thought or twinkling star
Of wisdom's light in the wondrous mind of man—
If thou canst not teach
With truth's authoritative seal,
Thy fellowman these things—then
In her chaste and honored name,
Thy theories cast away, and
Turn thy steps into upward paths
And lead thy race along the way
Of wisdom and of truth, until
The eager eyes of universal man
Shall behold the star of utmost aspiration.
Teach man to read the living pages
Of God's revelation unto him,
In the open book of Nature

Until he shall see and know
The essential form of good in all His perfect works
How all for each and each for all
In harmony ever strive.
Teach him that beauty flows in streams,
Abundant and eternal,
From sources of supreme necessity,
Through all the unbounded universe.
That which God has wrought
Can never die—there is no death
In all His wide domain! but
Eternal, active life and ever ascending effort
Fixed and universal!
Travel thou the ascending way of progress
Unto lofty planes,
And guide thy fellowman to realms
Of light eternal, universal.
Mark well the upward path,
And hold thy light aloft, until
The assembled race of man shall see the way
And, following after thee,
Rise to wisdom's heights sublime!

UNCLE BOB'S OBSERVATIONS

Jes' make dis observashun an' keep it on yo' min'
You'll fin' de smalles' 'taters un'neath de rankes' vine.
Sometimes you see er little boat wid er great big ho'n,
An' when it blows de signal loud, all de steam is gone.
When walkin' th'ough de co'n fiel', an' lookin' as you walk,
You apt ter see de smalles' ear on de bigges' stalk.
De rotten apple falls when you give de tree er shake,
An' you c'n fin' de smalles' fish in de bigges' lake.
Aldough de Inglish sparrer can't sing no music chune,
Dar ain't nothin' on de yearth dat gits ter work so soon.
'Tain't de kin' er clo's he w'ars dat makes de fines' man,
An' de bigges' talk won't change de Lo'd A'mighty's plan.
Don't make yo' jedgment up by de fin'ry dat you see,
Der ain't no fruit dat's fit ter eat on de flower tree.
I sca'cely needs ter tell you dat you'll of'n come ercross,
Folks dat ride in kerriges dat runs widout er hoss,
An' while dey's p'radin' roun' dis way, makin' sich er show,
Dey's axin' fer extenshuns ob de intrus' what dey owe.

You hear 'em braggin' might'ly erbout whar dey has
been,
When you fin' de gospel truth its nothin' 'tall but
win',
De man dat makes de loudes' noise when he comes
ter pray
Like he thinks de Lo'd is de'f or mighty fur erway,
Don't give no everdence to me dat he's filled wid
grace,
Onless he takes his 'ligion home f'm de meetin' place.
Sometimes I sorter doubts de man dat lingers in de
aisles,
Speakin' wid er Sunday voice an' sanctifyin' smiles.
Er thankin' God A'mighty dat he's done been elec'
Shakin' han's permisc'usly wid monst'ous good
effec',
An' talkin' 'bout de sinners wid mighty solem' chat,
But shets his eyes in silent pra'r when he sees de hat.

WHEN IT IS HOT

Written by Bert Lerton Taylor and published in the Chicago Tribune and reproduced in the Literary Digest.

"Consider Mr. Shadrach,
Of fiery furnace fame;
He didn't bleat about the heat
Or fuss about the flame.
He didn't stew and worry
And get his nerves in kinks,
Nor fill his skin with limes and gin
And other "cooling drinks."

Consider Mr. Meshach,
Who felt the furnace, too;
He let it siz nor queried "Is
It hot enough for you?"
He didn't mop his forehead,
And hunt a shady spot;
Nor did he say "Gee! What a day!
Believe me it's some hot!"

Consider, too, Abed-nego,
Who shared his comrades' plight;
He didn't shake his coat and make
Himself a holy sight.
He didn't wear suspenders
Without a coat and vest;
Nor did he scowl and snort and howl
And make himself a pest.

Consider, friends, this trio—
  How little fuss they made.
They didn't curse when it was worse
  Than ninety in the shade.
They moved about serenely
  Within the furnace bright,
And soon forgot that it was hot,
  With no relief in sight."

JUST A BIT OF SARCASM ON THE ABOVE

Dear Mr. Bert Lerton Taylor:
  Your message I have read,
And I have noted, carefully,
  Your statements, therein made.
I thank you for the facts you write
  About Abed-nego,
Also of Shadrach and Meshach,
  The gents you used to know.
I thank you for the lights thrown on
  These men of "furnace fame"
By which I see they had some traits
  That others cannot claim.

Now, Mr. Taylor, tell me, please,
  (As you were there, and know)
What was the "cut" of Shadrach's coat?
  Also Abed-nego?
Did Meshach wear a "swallowtail?"
  Did Shadrach wear the same?

And did Abedny's coat conform
And fit well on his frame?
Regarding dress you only make
Some ref'rence to his coat,
And to suspenders and a vest,
But nothing else denote.
That seems to me somewhat abridged
For dress, at that affair;
What service did suspenders do
If no pant'loons were there?

A fete was given, I infer,
In honor of these men,
And you were there as special guest,
And wrote the story then.
How did they come? In touring car
Or in a limousine?
How did Abed-nego appear?
(Without full dress I mean);
Did he attract attention, much,
When he walked in the hall,
Or when he danced the "Turkey Trot"
With damsels at the ball?

You say Shadrach did not partake
Of "cooling drinks" or gin!
Perhaps he was a "Grape Juice" chap,
Or something else, akin;
Did you offer to "set 'em up?"
And did he tell you why
He could not "clink" a glass with you,
And one "long red one" try?

Were Meshach and Abed-nego
On "water wagons" too?
Or were they drinking "cocktails" when
Shadrach conversed with you?

Your answers to the questions asked,
Will be of highest worth,
Because you are the only man,
Now living on the earth,
Who saw the men of which you write,
A little while ago;
And you, alone, have all the facts
Of which I want to know;
This fete, at which you four were guests,
Is noted far and wide,
And what you say about it now,
Will never be denied;
Your mem'ry seems so very clear,
On what was said and done
While you were there, I trust you will
Let all you know be known.

DEVOTION

Though I wander o'er the realm of passion and of pain,
Searching all the days through length'ning years to be,
For desire's full fruition—contentment to attain,
I will come back, at last, unsatisfied, to thee.
Though I sail on nectared seas, where pleasures never cease,
Or, at the altar of felicity, I bow,
Though, by siren songs, I'm lured to the shores of bliss,
I will come back to thee, with my unfettered vow.
Though I behold in other eyes, lights that bid me stay,
Or, words from other lips that doubt you, I may hear,
And for happiness without you, I may strive and pray,
Yet I'll come back to you, with prayers unanswered, dear.
Though the night of age may bring ghosts of years forsaken
That hold me in chilly grasp, far from youth's allure,
Though my flesh be shriveled and strength from me be taken,
My spirit will be with you, while truth and love endure.

GIVIN' AN' RECEIVIN'.

To Ida Williamson Brown
Christmas 1909

By wise men ov' ol'
It was said, I berlieve,
'Tis better ter give
Dan it is ter receive.
Dat mought er ben true
In de deys dat ar' gone,
But it aint been so
Sence de day I was bo'n.
Dars nothin' as good
As sump'n I'm need'n,
Comin' right to me
Wid out any heedin'.
Slip'n' up slyly,
While I's er reflectin'
On changes er life,
An' nothin' expectin'.
Jes so, Chris'mas day,
I was tryin' ter look spry,
Wid one clean collar
An' er dingy neck tie,
When I was study'n'
Jes what I was ter do
In comes er necktie,
Mighty silky and new.

I's got it on now,
An' you jes' orter see,
How han'some I looks
Wid er silk tie on me.
I's smilin' er smile
An' er struttin' eroun',
Light as er feather
Hardly techin' de groun'.
Now, say, aint I right
When I is berlievin'
Dat nothin' is quite
As good as receivin'?
Dat sweet little Miss
Who sont me dat tie,
I aint call her name
Kase, lem me tell you why—
Ol' Uncle Remus
Sez it isn't good fo'm,
To call in comp'ny
Nice names erway f'm home.
I'll tell you dis much,
De name what she sen's
Is long in de middle
An' shorter at de en's.
May de good Lo'd bless
Dat pretty little chil'
All through de Chris'mas
Wid de angel smile.
May de New Year bring
All de pleasure she loves,
An' de rich blessin's

From de hebens erbove.
In de years ter come,
May de sweet flowers grow
Bo'f sides her pafway,
Whereber she may go.

Uncle Henry.

MISSISSIPPI

No where in Anglo-Saxon veins,
Does rich blood flow in purer strains,
Than in Mississippi.
No where are men so brave and true,
No where are coward slaves so few,
As in Mississippi.
No where does patriotism strive,
And statesmen's lofty ideals thrive,
As in Mississippi.
No where are women quite so fair,
Whose beauty conquers everwhere,
As in Mississippi.
No where do sweeter flowers grow,
Or gentler breezes ever blow,
Than in Mississippi.
No where do crystal dew-drops shine,
Like diamonds on the flowered vine,
As in Mississippi.
No where does radiant life unfold,
Or where the clouds are tipped with gold,
As in Mississippi.
No where are sunlit days so bright,
Or where the moonbeams smile, at night,
As in Mississippi.
No where do stars so gently shine,
No where is sweet contentment mine,
As in Mississippi.
No where is love and peace my right,
Or where the heart's hopes are so bright,
As in Mississippi.

The trees, with sweetest music, ring,
When mocking birds, their love-songs sing,
In dear Mississippi.
No forests breathe such rich perfume,
As where the sweet magnolias bloom,
Down in Mississippi.
And there the scented south winds blow,
Where monarch pines and cypress grow,
In my Mississippi.
Sacred are thy patriot graves,
Where freedom's flag so proudly waves,
Dearest Mississippi.
Thy loving arms, with tender care,
Enwrap thy children everywhere,
Mother Mississippi.

In Memory of My Friend

HON. JOHN C. KYLE

Who Died at His Home in Sardis, Miss.,
July 6, 1913

In silent grief, I stood beside the bier, where slept
my friend,
And looked upon his pallid face, in death, Life's
mortal end.
His voice is hushed, he sleeps in peace, but still his
spirit lives,
And points our footsteps to the path he trod, with
light it gives.
His was a soul that stood alone, unmoved by error's
might,
When yielding cowards fled, or turned aside, to shun
the fight.
With trenchant lance, he fought, and wavered not,
where vice was strong,
And, full-armed with courage, maintained the right
against all wrong.
He stood above the baser world, as stands the moun-
tain peak
Above the vale, but stooped, in sympathy, to help
the weak.
With gen'rous hand, he freely succored want, with-
out display,
And kindly deeds, where'er he found distress
marked well his way.
He walked with truth, through all the years of life
and faltered not,

And love of justice, equity and right, he ne'er forgot.
He chose the path of honor and traveled the lofty way,
While serving God and humankind, unto Life's final day.
No promised gain could his high purpose swerve, or selfish greed
E'er tempt him to forget the Golden Rule, in thought or deed.
As husband, father, neighbor, statesman, man, with steadfast aim,
He scaled the heights where highest duty stands, and wrote his name.
God sent him to the world to fill a place in His wise plan,
A guide to virtuous deeds, a faithful friend and honest man.

GRACE AND BEAUTY

The mountains rise in majesty
  Toward the azure dome
And crystal waters ripple down
  Their paths to ocean home.
The floating clouds adorned with gold.
  At morn and night appear.
But these need not detain the eye,
  There's beauty ev'rywhere.

The distant woods in hazy blue,
  The skies that close them in,
The bow of promise on the clouds
  When ev'ning shades begin.
The rolling landscape seen afar,
  The hill tops over there
May not claim our praises most,
  For grace is ev'rywhere.

The waving fields of lustrous green,
  The infant leaves in spring,
The flower's bloom in summer time,
  When Nature's children sing.
And all the world in rich array
  Of beauty, grace and cheer
Command the homage that we give
  But they are ev'rywhere.

The restless waves that never cease,
  On heaving ocean breast,
The dells where modest flowers grow,

And Nature seems at rest.
The far off lights in jeweled sky,
That softly twinkle there,
Are but a part of gentle grace
And beauty, ev'rywhere.

LOVE'S AWAKENING

The germ within the flower's seed
  Beneath cold soils hidden,
Will sleep, unmoved, in prison tomb,
  Nor wake to life unbidden.
From frosty breath and winter's touch,
  'Twill shrink and hide forever,
And to the north wind's chilly call
  It is responsive, never.
But when the glow and warmth of spring
  Comes with its sunny power,
It bursts in twain its prison shell
  And lo! the gorgeous flower.
And, so, the germ of human love,
  Within the heart lies sleeping,
Unmoved by selfish voice or touch
  Its silence ever keeping.
But when a kindred love has pierced
  The tomb where it lies waiting,
It wakes from solitary sleep,
  Its mate, with joy, uniting.
And thus, the love within my heart,
  For kindred love appealing,
Awoke at thy compelling touch,
  Its joyous life revealing.
Through all the years to come 'twill grow
  In sunlight of thy presence,
Beneath thy smiles 'twill bud and bloom,
  But wither in thy absence.

WOMAN SUFFRAGE

God pity the land, whence comes the demand
  Of women who want to vote
And to social woe, are striving to go
  For reasons that are remote.

What is the reply, when they are asked why
  From the sacred home they'd turn,
To wade in the mire and dangerous fire,
  Where her tender cheeks must burn?

'Tis a fearful fall, when woman, in all
  Her regal sway, as a queen,
Goes down in the street, "ward heelers" to meet
  However well she may mean.

The home is the plane, whereon she may reign,
  With credit to all the race;
But when she is gone, and home is alone,
  No other can fill her place.

From her high estate springs a nation's fate,
  And she is the pilot, true,
Who must guide the ship on its onward trip,
  By guiding aright the crew.

The nation is blest when its homes give rest
  And peace as the years go on,
Where virtues are taught and young minds are
    fraught
  With strength for work to be done.

In woman's right hand is all the command
Of what a nation should be
And you, who would vote, these suggestions note,
If really you would be free.

Begin a campaign, that all homes contain
A mother, in fact and in truth,
Where men may be made, of a stalwart grade;
Out of the nation's youth.

The basis is laid when the mother has made
The rules of her home aright
And there is the place, from which we must trace
The trend of a nation's flight.

Go ye to the source, and clear up the course
Of the political stream,
And the world will see your sincerity
The fallen State to redeem.

If you will begin at birth of the sin,
And start the infant aright
Both, woman and man, if sincere's your plan,
Will, ultimately, have their right.

THE WORLD IS GROWING BETTER

The world is growing better
  When YOU the right pursue,
When self is put behind you
  In everything you do.

If on the stars you're looking,
  While pressing on the way,
The world will yet be happy,
  As follows night the day.

The world will rise up with you
  In the Universal sum,
For God has so decreed it,
  In the days that are to come.

If you will guard your actions
  And to yourself be true,
The world will be, forever,
  A paradise to you.

THE PRICE OF GOLD

Man, ne'er content, is prone to turn
To pathways he has yet to learn,
And seeking that which is unknown
Finds, oft, the pleasures sought, have flown.
An urban life of fancied ease,
From peaceful, rural home, he sees,
And like the moth, unheeding, flies
To false lights, where contentment dies.
The freedom found on field and farm
The country's quiet, blissful charm,
Are given in exchange for gains
That bind the soul with galling chains
For spacious halls and gilded domes
Where splendid halls and marble homes
And crowded streets with busy strife
Beget a cramped and sordid life,
Where ceaseless care, the rush and din
The hurry and the greed to win,
Eat out the heart and dwarf the soul
And bar the way to highest goal,
Where kindly acts and words of peace
And love of fellowman will cease.
The orphan's cry—the widow's wail
Gaunt hunger's plaint—the beggar's tale,
Unheeded pass and downward go
Along misfortune's way of woe.
The busy hand engaged in gain
Seeks not to stay another's pain.
"Give not" will miser's lust appease,
Because base avarice 'twill please,

But robes of selfishness 'twill weave
And on the heart a burden leave.
The love of gold is love of dross
Though wealth is gained—the gain is loss.
Shadows that hoarded treasures cast
Will all true happiness outlast
Shut out God's sun—turn day to night
Call evil good and envy right
Will purchase woe with coin of peace
And miseries of life increase
Will drive out joys that once were known
Before the seeds of self were sown
Before sweet childhood's heart was sold
To slavish greed through lust of gold.
The painting on the glorious sky
The myriad smiling stars on high
The sunset clouds—the quiet night
The sleep of peace—the dawning light,
The birds' sweet song—the sunlit day,
Are riches that are cast away.
Within the walls of brick and stone
Man sees the wealth of gold alone,
And barters for the fruits of wrong.
The pleasures that to life belong,
Unmindful that the miser's hoard,
True happiness will not afford
The happy days that once were known,
The years of innocence now gone
Are treasures that his life has lost,
Such is the price his gold has cost.
Give me instead of slavish gain
The freedom found on rolling plain

Let those who will, in cities bide
Give me the rugged mountainside
Where, undisturbed, I live apart
From clash of trade, in busy mart.
Give me instead of city crowds,
The forest trees—the floating clouds
The prairies wide—the lazy herds
The sunlit sky—the happy birds.
Give me the shores where breezes, free,
Come, ever, from the restless sea.
Where surging waves unceasing roll
And my unbounded boundless soul
Inspired in its upward flight,
May wing its way to utmost height,
And the immortal mind may roam
From ocean depths to starry dome.

LOVE'S TRIBUTE

I see her face in ev'ry flower
In ev'ry day and ev'ry hour
In ev'ry star that shines at night
In ev'ry beam of golden light,
I hear her voice in ev'ry breeze,
That whispers softly through the trees
In ev'ry song the wild bird sings,
And melodies that Nature brings.
I see her in the clouds that move,
And o'er the smiling landscape rove,
In phantom forms that come and go,
Like elfins, in the twilight's glow.
Her beauty is on every rose
And ev'ry smiling flow'r that grows;
On ev'ry robe that Nature weaves,
And ev'ry tint on autumn leaves.
Her gentle touch is like the bliss
When dewdrops and sweet violets kiss,
Or like the placid lake whose breast
Lures dying sunbeams to their rest.
The swan but imitates her grace,
And lilies borrow from her face,
The shining orbs in far-off skies
Envy the radiance of her eyes.
Nature's children with songs rejoice,
Whene'er they hear her silv'ry voice.

UNCLE BOB'S PHILOSOPHY

Say boss; please sir, stop er minit,
I wants a wo'd wi' you,
You say, "jes come out wid it
An' let yo' wo'ds be few?"
Now jes' lis'n at dat white man!
What makes you hurry so?
I been stan'in' right in dis spot,
Waitin' er hour or mo'.
Bime by you gwi' git ter de een
Er dat big road, an' den
Jes' tell me, ef you pleases, sir,
Whar 'bouts you gwine to den?
Say, is you arter sump'n boss,
Or sump'n arter you
Dat keeps yo' trablin' all de time,
Please tell me, sir, fer true?
You say ain't nothin' arter you,
Den what you try'n ter ketch?
'Pears like you think it is erbout
To git beyon' your re'ch.
You stay dar in er great big house,
De sun can't git into,
I libs down in dat cabin dar,
Wid mo' sunshine dan you,
You tries to sleep in yo' sof' bed,
I sleeps down on de flo,
I wakes up in de mornin', fresh,
Does you feel dat way too?
You got de money, I got none,
Yit I has all I need,

I ain't got nothin' on my min'
Dat makes me think erhead.
When time ter eat comes roun' ter me
I eats my bread an' meat.
When yo' time come you hardly keer,
Kase nothin' tases sweet.
Does money make yo' titles clear
Up yonder in de skies?
Please tell me if it does, kase den,
I'll make some fo' I dies.
Say it don't? Den I don't want it,
Ef it takes my sleep erway,
An' make me run myself ter death
Like you does ev'ry day.
I wants my Heb'n here below,
Ef I can't git it dar,
So, I gwi' let de money go
An' git some heb'n hyar.

LOOKING BACKWARD

In the spelling book of childhood, that I used to know,
I turn the leaves of mem'ry back to the long ago,
And as I scan its pages, now, growing dimly, fast,
My thoughts go wand'ring back to the pathways of the past.

And all the world of manhood, of effort and of strife,
Retreat while I am taking this glimpse of childhood life.
The labor and the striving and weariness in vain
Vanish while I'm greeting my childhood, once again.

Then, comes to me, a yearning for the joys I have known,
And the faces of my playmates, that are forever gone.
And unforgotten pleasures, in which I took delight,
Which I see but dimly, in the ever deep'ning night.

And I long to gather up the threads of life, again,
And feel once more the thrill of its pleasure and its pain
To go back to the playgrounds, there in the long ago
To the sunlit glory of the days I used to know.

To wander in the fields and the woodlands as of yore,
And call up mem'ries, dear, from the distant nevermore—

To walk along the pathways, my childhood used to know,
Where youthful fancies led me in the dear old long ago.

I am told the old log schoolhouse has crumbled in decay,
And tangled weeds are growing where, once, I used to play
And the merry peals of laughter are now hushed and still,
That I used to hear around the school house on the hill.

The pasture, down below the road, I remember well,
Where it was my task to go for the cow that wore the bell.
Back there in the old days in the far-off nevermore,
When life, in radiant beauty, its rarest garments wore.

How well do I remember the sound of that old bell,
As upon my youthful ears its cheerful tinkle fell;
Often has it guided me to the cow that wore it, when
The pasture I was searching, to drive her to the pen.

The tasks imposed upon me, then, in the long ago,
I thought were hard, and hated them, but then, I didn't know
I would like to go back now, and youthful tasks renew
And drive the old cow to the pen, as I used to do.

The water in the spring branch, fringed by the willow trees,
Still glistens in the sunshine and dallies with the breeze—
Still flows along its pathway, singing its song of praise,
Through the smiling meadow, as in my childhood days.

O! rippling, gladsome water, God's priceless gift to man,
In ever youthful laughter, renewing youth again—
Still bounding o'er your pathway, merrily to the sea—
Leaping in your ecstasy and dancing in your glee.

Inviting rarest flowers to bloom along your way—
Coaxing happy birds to come and sing their tuneful lay—
Giving life and beauty to the foliage of the trees,
Singing, gladly singing, with the ever present breeze.

I hear the laughing water, so young and yet so old,
And see life's early morning in radiance unfold.
And I long to breathe again its energizing air,
And with the bubbling water its youthful joys share.

I want to scamper here and there, o'er the fields again,
Where the joys of my childhood and of my youth remain;

To gather up the mem'ries that were to me so dear,
And link them with the sorrows that, now, are ever
near.

Give me an hour, one sunlit hour, that in my youth
was known,
In the days, the happy days, of my childhood that
are gone,
Let me feel the ecstasy I felt in days of yore,
And I'll balance up accounts with life forevermore.

WOMAN'S SPHERE

The highest sphere of woman is in the sacred home,
Where the hopes of humankind are nurtured'neath its dome.
The wife who has lost her trust in husband, father, son,
Is stranded on an ocean of helplessness alone.

She who truly loves her home, no greater rights can claim;
Laws of man, no greater rights, for woman can proclaim,
Than the high inherent rights with which she is endowed,
Rights which human laws can give, her higher rights becloud.

There can be no higher place for woman to attain,
Than the precincts of her home, no dearer right to gain.
There is not, in all the world, a place so much in need
Of love's devoted efforts, man's upward course to speed.

Woman is the queen of grace, of gentleness and peace,
And in the realm of loyal hearts, she holds supremest place.
Her power o'er all the world, of virtue and of love
By rights, divine, belong to her, and, man, those rights approve.

When, from out the home she goes, her sphere in life
to find,
Or contend in politics, duties are left behind,
Duties that she must perform, or they'll be left
undone;
Desolate will be the land, when homes are left alone.

Then, social life will surely go into swift decay,
And the altars of its childhood will be swept away,
The cable of higher manhood, then, from its place
will slip,
And on time's treach'rous ocean will drift the social
ship.

Oh! Mothers, wives and sisters, stay on your regal
throne,
And hold aloft the sceptre of life's supremest crown;
God ordained you for that throne, upon the higher
plane,
Over this realm, of our hopes, continue thou to
reign.

HEAVEN IS NOT FAR AWAY

None are so poor as they who toil,
  Unmindful of the wealth they own
In all the realm of sight and sound,
  Where heaven's bounteous gifts are strewn.
None are so blind, in all the world,
  As they who can, and will not see
None so enslaved as they who sleep
  While nature calls them to be free.
If we would only look and see
  The beauty found in every day,
The changing tints and shapes of clouds
  And flowers that bloom along the way
The freshness of the morning dew,
  Shimmering in the sun's embrace,
The swaying dance of forest leaves
  That move with gentle ease and grace
The water's rippling, joyous song,
  As it hurries down, in laughing glee,
Along its cool, refreshing way,
  To the bosom of the waiting sea,
The mating birds, with love-songs, sweet,
  Filling the air with gladsome sound
Flitting through realms of leaf and bloom,
  'Till their coquettish mates are found.
The golden shafts of living light
  That mark the ways of happiness
The far-off hills, at sunset gates,
  In grandeur and in beauty drest
The grassy plains 'neath sky of blue
  The evening calm, the twilight glow

The soft, sweet breath of dying day,
With sounds and light that come and go,
We'd find the peace our hearts have sought
The pleasures we have wanted, long,
The hours, with joy, would overflow,
And life, would then, be one sweet song.
The common things of life, we know,
The things that come in ev'ry day,
Are, all, so dear, so sweet and pure,
Heaven cannot be far away.

WHY?

Why do the sweet flowers
  Blush when you pass?
Why do the bright sunbeams
  Kiss your fair face?
Why do the birds, sweetly
  Sing to you so,
In field and in woodland
  Wherever you go?
Why do the soft breezes
  Linger so near,
Caressing your tresses,
  Tell me, my dear?
I think the sweet flowers
  Blush with a sigh
Forgetting their beauty,
  When you pass by,
And while you're sleeping, they
  Drink the fresh dew,
And lovingly gather rare
  Fragrance for you.
I think all the sunbeams
  Speeding through space,
Are rivals to kiss your
  Beautiful face.
And birds awake early
  With joyful song,
To sing for you sweetly
  All the day long.
I think the soft breezes
  Linger so near,

To whisper their love notes
Into your ear.
Bright sunbeams and flowers,
Jeweled with dew,
Sweet song birds and breezes,
All are for you.

WISHES

If wishes were like flowers
Of rare and radiant hue,
I'd pluck the sweetest of them
And send them straight to you.
If wishes were like sunbeams,
That sparkle on the dew,
I'd fill them full of joy
And send them all to you.
If I could wish the stars
That deck the heavenly blue
Into sparkling diamonds,
I'd give them all to you.
If the heart's best wishes,
Could be coined into gold,
I'd increase your riches
A hundred thousand fold.

THE OLD SLAVE AND THE NEW

"He promised that he'd be her slave,
But that was long ago.
For her, he'd plan and toil and save,
But that was long ago.
He helped her from the car and he
Would run to get her chair when she
Was twenty and he twenty-three,
But that was long ago.
He took her gently by the arm
But that was long ago.
To guide her well away from harm,
But that was long ago.
He bounded at her beck and call
Before her he would fain to fall
And put her rubbers on, but all
This happened long ago.
He won the maiden's love and they
Were married long ago.
She sometimes sits and sighs today
For dear old long ago.
She's getting gray at thirty-four
He puts her rubbers on no more,
And all she does is toil and bore
Her slave of long ago."

—S. E. Kizer.

COMMENT

"He promised that he'd be her slave
But that was long ago."
Perhaps 'twas but a passing wave
On shores of long ago.
'Twas in the ecstasy of life
Before maturer years of strife
When, wanting most of all, a wife
In the long, long ago.
No doubt he loved to "take her arm"
'Twas natural to do so,
Her youth and beauty were his charm
In the long, long ago.
Her gentle voice, then, made him feel
Love's sweetest thrill, and he would kneel
And "put her rubbers on" with zeal
In the long, long ago.
Was he or she to blame, when they
Were married long ago?
And if "she sits and sighs today"
"For dear old long ago"
And if, within his breast, the flame
Of youthful love is not the same,
Is he, and he alone, to blame
Because of long ago?
Wherefore, should he be censured, when
He's not in long ago?
He's older now, than he was then,
In the long, long ago.
His manhood's youth was spent for her,
His form is bent with toil for her

Still by her side he's always near
As in the long, long ago.
There is but one youthtime in life
With all it must be so,
'Twas then he won her for his wife,
In the sweet long ago.
Now care and toil his hours share,
The gleams of youth no longer are
Flashing from his eyes as there
Back in the long ago.
For both, the years, with equal pace,
Have fled from long ago.
Perhaps he turns a saddened face
Toward the long ago.
May he not sometimes think, awhile
Of her sweet and coquettish smile
That lured him on with artless guile,
In the long, long ago.
The stern realities of life
Take him from long ago,
And in the world's great field of strife
Not known in long ago.
Urged on by sterner, stronger zeal,
He's battling for her earthly weal,
Does she expect him now to "kneel"
As in the long ago?
Through life, his burdens must be borne
(They came since long ago)
And when he's old and gray and worn,
Far from the long ago.
Sweet mem'ries of that long ago
Will, now and then, pass to and fro

Across his weary way, and so
He'll think of long ago.
Then let us draw the curtain now
Past, is the long ago.
And help each other, rightly, how
To think of long ago.
Shoulder to shoulder, let us stand,
And walking onward hand in hand
Through days and years, now length'ning, and
Mourn not for long ago.

CLEOPATRA TO OCTAVIA

Usurper of another's place,
Come you, in jealous rage to me,
Because, forsooth, the gods have made
Your face less fair than mine to see?
You say that I, by subtle arts,
Have stealthily usurped and hold
The empire of a heart you claim?
Your title, then, to me unfold!
No less is mine, I claim, than yours;
If I have stolen that which you,
By stealth, from Fulva did acquire,
How do you better right construe?
I am aware how well you schemed,
From Fulva, Ant'ny's love to gain,
How you deceived and drove her out
To bear, in grief, a sullied name.
'Twas not from Fulva that I sought
To take, by stealth, her wedded lord.
Octavia did, now, him I hold,
By virtue of no greater fraud.
If I, no legal right may claim
To Ant'ny's love, I equal you,
And in that we may be acquit,
Than mine, no greater is your due.
What, pray, gave you the victory
O'er Fulva when you sought her prize?
Was it by whispered treachery
That on the wings of rumor flies?
Or was it poison sent by you,
In secret ways, to Ant'ny's heart,

To stir his jealous rage against
The wife from him you schemed to part?
Was Fulva's less a comely face
Than that you now present to me?
Had she less grace of form than you,
Or you some charm I do not see?
Possessed you then accomplishments
That gave you vantage of a foe?
Was beauty's mark upon your face?
If so, why did you let it go?
Do weapons, that you wielded then,
No longer serve you in your fight,
A stolen empire to retain,
Or self-laudation to requite?
I have learned well how you respect
Another's claim, when love defies
Weak custom's bonds, and with what ease
Sweet love may break the strongest ties.
Now, let negotiations end
'Twixt you and me, let war ensue,
Try you with me the skill and arms
Employed, when you, fair Fulva slew.
And, then, go drink as Fulva did,
When you gave her the cup of hate,
And tremble not when justice bids
You drink from that same cup of fate.

DUTY'S PAINS AND PLEASURES

Oh! the agonizing heartaches
Duty, oft, decrees we bear
And our sweetest pleasures, often,
Garments of deep sorrow wear.
Hope, inviting, leads us onward
To the shores where sirens sing;
Where deceiving, luring voices
Oft conceal the poisonous sting.
With the springtime and the summer
Come the happy birds and flowers,
Bringing gladness, bringing pleasure
In the train of joyful hours.
But with these the clouds come, also,
With the muttering thunder storms,
And from out their angry bosoms,
Flash the lightning's fearful forms.
Thus it is in life's arena,
Peace with sorrow each must share
For, where'er sweet pleasure lingers
Pain and sorrow will be there.

SUNSHINE

There's always sunshine, somewhere,
  Somewhere, not far away;
There's happiness waiting near,
  For us in every day.
The stars are always shining
  Above the darkness here,
And there's a silver lining
  To clouds that hover near.
Then fill up life with gladness,
  For sorrow leave no room,
Bright smiles will banish sadness
  And drive away its gloom.

AMERICAN LIBERTY

America, may you, yet, claim
Full victory, in freedom's name?
In this, the land of liberty,
Are all your sons and daughters free?

Words of freedom have been spoken,
But, are all the fetters broken?
Are there no slaves in galling chains,
Is there no bondage that remains?

The tyranny of kings, we know,
Was driven out long, long ago,
And then, ten million slaves, we saw,
Made free by force of bloody war.

Has poverty no kingdom here,
Does lash of want excite no fear?
Are there no slaves whose trembling lips
Bespeak the pain of hunger's whips?

Who are the hosts, bound down in chains,
In yonder realm where passion reigns—
Sulking there in darkened ways
And loathsome dens where evil stays?

Are they not slaves, of abject kind,
Whose appetites base passions bind—
Who wear the chains that keep them there
Where degradation's marks, they bear?

America, "land of the free,"
You've not, yet, gained full liberty;

Your task, long years ago begun,
Demands your labors 'til 'tis done.

The hard taskmasters that remain,
And drive their slaves in your domain,
Must be sent forth from freedom's land,
By order of your high command.

Sound freedom's trump and call the roll
Of slaves who, yet, are paying toll,
Command your teeming millions' aid—
Let none their duty, now evade.

Drive the tyrant masters out—
Put freedom's enemies to rout;
America! land of the free,
Lead, thou, the hosts of Liberty.

TO IDA

May thy joys be pure
As thy heart is true
And thy thoughts as sweet as violets' breath.
As the sun's warm rays
Is to springtime days
May pleasure be thy companion till death.
When, as the sweet rose
Thy life petals close,
Thy spirit will thenceforth be with the blest.
Then sorrow shall cease
In eternal peace,
And thine be evermore heaven's sweet rest.

LIFE'S EVERYDAY

Better heed the promptings,
Of good that we can do,
While our friends are with us,
And loyal hearts are true.

Better paint the rainbow,
Of promise, day by day,
On clouds, that hover near,
Along life's changing way.

Better, deeds of kindness,
For those who need them now,
Than our grief and sorrow,
When at the grave we bow.

Better smiles and laughter,
With loved ones, while we may,
Than tears at the ending,
When they are gone away.

Better, the little deeds,
That make up pleasure's sum,
Than to cherish discord,
And heartaches, in the home.

Better to wipe the tears,
From eyes they fill today,
Than to feel the aching
That grief cannot allay.

Better, O, 'tis better,
To send the sunbeam's glow
Into lives about us,
While life's sweet waters flow.

CONFESSION

O! I've tried so hard to forget you
To drive sweet mem'ries from my breast
To hide from the vision that haunts me
To blot out the beautiful past.
I have tried to shut out the image
That you sent to my heart that day,
When your eyes met mine in fair exchange
Of love, that illumined our way.
I've tried to escape the enthrallment
Of joy, that hems in my way,
And the wish you inspired within me,
Forever, in bondage, to stay.
I have tried to call back the beauties,
We saw, in the untamed flowers
Of the rippling music of waters
And glories of the golden hours.
I've tried to think only of nature
The thrall of her changeable ways
Of enchanting hills and of forests
And the dells where the wild fern stays.
I have tried to think of the freedom
Of winds that toy with the trees
Of the pathless ways where we rambled,
And whispers of the twilight breeze.
I've tried to think, only, of beauties
We saw, and loved, you and I
Of flowers that bloomed by the wayside,
And the far-off blue of the sky.
I have tried to think that the pleasures
I felt in the days that are gone,

When you and I strolled in the wildwood,
  Would come to me there, when alone.
I have tried to think that the heaven
  Of the hills and the dells, that we found,
Belonged to the wide realm of nature,
  And, by laws unchanging, were bound;
But I've walked, again, in the places
  Where we've been, in days that are gone,
And I've sought, in vain, for the beauties
  And the joys, with you, I have known;
I have found that all of the pathways,
  Where you and I wandered alone,
Are barren of beauty and pleasure
  Since, from them, your footsteps have gone.
I've learned that the beauties of nature,
  And heaven, that is always near,
Are, forever about that object
  That is, to the heart, most dear;
I have found that the joys we cherish,
  Of love and of life, are a part,
And the doors of heaven are opened
  By the key that unlocks the heart.

HYPOCRISY

The canker of gold is eating the old
Heroic virtues away.
The church of God sleeps, sweet charity weeps
While self holds dominant sway.
Like the ass of old, with insolence bold
Parading the lion's skin,
In false robes arrayed, by shame undismayed
Walks the bold Pharisee, sin.
This hypocrite good, would go if it could
And sleep in satan's own bed.
And from that foul place with sanctified face
Go where saints fear to tread.
Pretension and Pride, endeavor to hide
Mockery, in music of chimes.
But firmly truth stands with uplifted hands
To God, denouncing such crimes.

CLEOPATRA TO CAESAR

No, Caesar, no, you tempt me not,
Your words pass me, unheeded, by,
As do the idle winds that blow
A requiem, where your virtues lie.
Your bribes are impotent to move
My fixed resolve, as is your breath
To check the wind's resistless course
Or hush the thunder's voice in death.
I am deaf to your ambassadors,
Your messages I do not hear,
Your murd'rous sword I do not dread,
Your tyrant will I do not fear.
I spurn your falsely proffered gifts,
Kingdoms, empires, I do not crave,
Your gems and diadems I'd scorn
To dwell with Antony, a slave.
No sceptered rule with regal pomp,
No power that you can bestow
Will ever teach me to forget
That you are my relentless foe.
While your dishonored banners fly
O'er wounded hearts and prostrate forms,
My Egypt weeps—it moves you not,
Though death stalks in her empty homes.
And, yet, from foul perdition's depths
You send contagion of your soul
To poison me, with murd'rous crime,
Against him, whom your fears extol.
Your vaunted name with murder linked,
Your coward aim, a foe, to slay,

By instrument of treachery,
Make demons turn, in shame, away.
No, Caesar, all the Gods shall know
That your foul perfidy I spurn
With the hot tempest of my hate
And with my curse, your bribes return.
My Egypt groans beneath your tread
And hunger, gaunt, and want and pain
Hold carnival where I have ruled
A happy, prosperous domain.
Yet, tyrant, know that there is left
That which your empire cannot buy:
'Tis Antony's love, and more to me
Than all the wealth 'neath heaven's sky.
Though conquered, I will never ride
A pris'ner in your barb'rous train,
Naught in your Rome, save memory,
Of me, shall your triumph contain.
If Antony may not abide
In life with me, if you so fear
His greater name and stronger arm,
Then know, his sentence I will share.

A CHRISTMAS PRESENT

On presenting to my sister, Miss Lizzie Streater, a pair of glass odor cases, enwrapped with silk, on December 25th, 1894.

These trifles, Lizzie, are for you
A gift, this Christmas day.
A token, that, perchance, may help,
A brother's love to pay.
Accept them, not for what they are,
Neither for what they seem,
Nor yet for simple show or worth,
But in affection's name.
There's little worth in robes of silk,
Such as these cases wear,
There's little to appreciate
In pretense anywhere.
Their worth to you would be as great
Without this silken dress,
If they were clad in plainer robes
They'd give no service less.
If they were not in fashion's folds,
Adorned, as now they are,
They would, with fullness, none the less,
Hold sweet odors rare.
Not those are great whose lives are spent
In vain and idle show,
Performance is the fruitful field,
Where highest honors grow.
Work, of each life is demanded,
Work for every day,
'Tis the price of all existence,

And fully must we pay.
Then be courageous, trust thyself,
No conscious duty shun,
Whatever there is in life to do,
May be divinely done.
Help each other o'er life's pathway,
It is the Master's plan,
The highest service unto Him
Is service unto man.
'Tis not in gilded palaces,
The truly great are found,
'Tis not in most attractive words
The greatest truths abound.
'Tis not in mines of precious stones,
Nor veins of golden ore,
We find the priceless treasures for
The mind's eternal store.
'Tis not in beauty's rarest forms
That sweetest flowers grow;
'Tis not from glittering things of earth
The highest pleasures flow.
'Tis not in fashion's gaudy train
Nor halls of midnight mirth
In less pretentious walks of life
We find the truest worth.
The station of these cases now
Should not attract us more,
Than places they have occupied
In lower spheres before.
What have they been, what are they now,
What lessons give to life,
What hopes inspire, what courage wake

In heaven aspiring strife?
Through what period they have come,
What storms in ages past,
In darkness deep, how long they've slept,
Ere dawned the light at last.
How many Christmas tides they've known,
How much of joy or woe,
How many New Years they have seen,
Perhaps we'll never know.
It may be that we know not how,
From sand beds 'neath the sea,
A power divine has brought them up
To crystal purity.
It may be that through eons past
Through Nature's conflicts great,
They've struggled up to higher planes
From former humble state.
From simple things, like these, we may
Inspiring lessons learn,
And know that there forever is
A higher place to earn.
Then measure not this gift with coins
Of silver or of gold,
But with the higher currency
The heart's affections hold.
My earnest New Year's wishes are
That you find its treasure
Of full three hundred sixty-five
Happy days of pleasure.
And that your life through many years
As golden sunbeams bright,

With cheerful words and loving deeds,
Dispense its gentle light.
'Mid other scenes in days to come,
Sleepless be your mem'ry
Of home, sweet home, and loved ones there.
Including—

Brother Henry.

THE PRODIGAL

Once I was young and as free from care
As the children out there at play;
For the world had naught of sorrow or pain,
And never a sun-hidden day.

I rode in the car of sweet content,
Drawn by swift steeds of desire,
Along the way, where flowers of spring,
Danced, gaily, in beauty's attire.

The past was hidden 'neath joys I found
In pleasures of the passing day,
While the bow of promise lured me on
To the morrow's untrodden way.

On, on through the beautiful springtime
And summer of life that was fair,
I sped in the car of contentment,
With never a thought of dull care.

And, speeding through summer to autumn,
I sought my pleasure-bound way,
'Til the car of content that bore me,
Began to show signs of decay.

And the dull, jaded steeds of desire
Moved slowly, with faltering pace,
Over paths, then, losing their smoothness,
To the end of the sunbeams' race.

For the day of youthtime and pleasure,
Faded in the twilight of care,
And the mists of sorrow and heartaches,
Came down like a pall of despair.

Then, into the darkness, compelling,
On the trail of desolate fate,
I was borne in the car of contrition,
To dark Gethsemane's gate.

And, now, all the wonderful treasures,
That the young years offered to me,
Come, dimly, like ghosts in the darkness,
From the past I'll nevermore see.

If I could go back to the pathways,
Where the flowers of happiness grew,
And see all the glow and the glory
Of the rare, rich beauties I knew.

When, there, in the glorious morning,
My life was a beautiful song,
I'd follow the way of right living,
That leads from the highway of wrong.

I'd marshal the strength of my youthtime,
And steadfastly climb the high way,
That leads from ephemeral pleasures,
To the wealth of life's ev'ry day.

With eyes on the blue sky of heaven,
Filled up with the sun's golden light,

And the stars, that shimmer like diamonds,
And smile on the pathways of right.

I would turn away from temptation,
And follow the straight narrow way,
To the goal of highest endeavor,
And the light of eternal day.

DO I LOVE THEE?

Do I love thee? O! language poor,
That will not voice the heart,
O lips, that cannot speak the love,
That is my life, a part.
Teach me to count the stars above
The sands on Ocean's shore
To measure heights and depths of space,
And time, forevermore.
Then I will tell my love for thee,
The thrill my heart doth feel;
Then I will prove how poor are words,
My heart's love to reveal.
Is there a place where love is not,
Of cold and chilly hate,
Where cheerless gloom of loveless night
Thought may not penetrate?
E'en there, for thee, my love will go,
Dispelling mournful night,
And make for thee a paradise,
Where life will be delight.
Do I love thee? Dost thou not feel,
From all things else, apart,
The constant stream that flows to thee
From this devoted heart?
Touch but my hand and feel the thrill
Which thou canst surely feel;
Look in mine eyes and see the love,
Which they cannot conceal.

WISDOM'S WAY

From Being's source, in curtained Past,
Beyond the birth of man,
Before Time's course began
The Author of all Being cast
The plan of happiness
In molds of comeliness;
And, then, at His supreme command,
Wisdom and beauty, twain,
Began eternal reign
O'er earth and air and sea and land.
And hid, He, treasure's store,
From vandal Time secure,
Thin veiled beneath suggestion's gauze.
Where man's all-searching mind,
With diligence, may find
Wealth, and wisdom of Nature's laws,
And, willing servants were,
By Him, placed everywhere,
Obedient to man's behest;
And his projecting will
May, life in them, instill,
And subject them to merit's test.
From out the roving cloud,
Where speak the thunders, loud,
And lightnings flash with fiery light,
Through centuries of time,
With Wisdom's light, sublime,
Comes service, in its forceful might.
The breathing ocean tides,
To him, their worth confides.

Who heeds the messages they bring.
Soft whispers of the night,
When dimly shines the light.
From stars, that in high orbits swing,
Will come and linger near,
And speak, to those who'll hear,
Of wondrous things we, yet, may know.
Leaf after leaf unfolds
And eager mind beholds
The stream of love and wisdow flow,
Bearing its freight of peace
And blessings that never cease.
The rich rewards of life await
The Master's workmen, now;
Put thy hands to the plow,
Pause not, the hour is growing late.
For work, you have been sent.
For work, your life is meant,
By the wise decree of Heaven.
The task to you assigned,
Go thou, today, and find
With talents your Lord has given.
Go forth and multiply
Those talents from on high,
Which God has loaned to you in trust,
Hide thou, them, not away,
Until the reckoning day,
Lest into darkness you be thrust.

BLIND NATHAN

We miss you, Nathan, since you've gone
From your accustomed place,
We miss you where the restless throng
Goes by with hurried pace;
We miss the rhymes you improvised,
And humorously told,
When calling on the crowd to come
And buy the news you sold;
We miss your self-reliant grit,
In the unequal strife
Your courage and your industry,
To earn your way in life;
We miss the lessons that you taught,
Of independent will
To climb, unaided, through the night,
Up life's forbidding hill.
No sun arose to end that night
No flowers bloomed for you
No smiles that lit the face of friends
Could pierce the darkness, through;
No jeweled dome of twinkling stars,
Sent you a gleaming ray
No silver beams, from azure depths,
Gave light along your way.
Affliction's weight pressed hard, we know,
But you kept up the fight
Until the hand that guided you
Was lost in endless night;
'Twas not till then, did you abate
Your unremitting work,

And never, though your tasks were hard,
Did you a duty shirk.
Less hampered, though we are, we know
We have not kept apace
With your untiring will to win
In life's contending race.
We miss you, friend, since you have gone
From Madison and Main,
We miss you when we pass that way,
And wish you back again.

THE DYING REQUEST

A lady, whose husband had preceded her to the grave, expressed the wish, just before her death, that a diamond ring, which he had placed upon her finger, be buried with her.

By some, the tender and beautiful sentiment was applauded—by others it was regarded as an indefensible vagary — a wasteful destruction of property.

"I am dying, dear friends, I'm dying,
My sands of life are running low.
I see the mists of darkness coming,
I feel the chilly death winds blow.

"At last life's ling'ring day is closing.
Grief and sorrow are almost o'er,
In heaven where my love is waiting,
Soon I will be, forevermore.

"Long, long ago, this ring he gave me,
Its brilliance tells his love for me,
Its every sparkle is a message
Of his dear love, eternally.

"Oh, how sweetly do I remember,
When on my hand, he placed this ring,
With vows of love he bade me wear it,
Nor part with it for anything.

"In token of that love I've kept it,
Here, as you see, next to my heart
There let it stay, do not disturb it,
It is my love—my soul, a part.

"It is a pledge—love's sweetest token—
A vow, that made our hearts as one,
In life, and through the years eternal,
'Til love and memory are done.

"Upon my heart, here, you will find it,
Grant this request—let it remain,
I have promised that I will keep it
Till he and I shall meet again."

She speaks no more, her life is ended,
The ebbing tide of breath is gone,
The thread that held her here is broken
At last, her task on earth is done.

Fold, now, her hands across her bosom,
In final sleep, her eyelids close
And gently lay her in her coffin,
Let none her dying wish oppose.

That ring is hallowed by devotion—
By love—undying, of two lives,
It represents the light of heaven,
That, even death's dark night, survives.

Let not the love of gold despoil it,
No greed disturb its calm repose—
No selfish thought its portals enter—
Its purity no voice oppose.

That lofty sentiment is holy,
The wealth of wedded love, it proves,
It lifts the soul from earth to heaven,
And to eternal goodness moves.

LIFE IS NOT THE SAME

Life is not the same, 'twas but yesterday,
The sun shone with bright effulgence.
Today his face is veiled in sombre gloom,
And shadows halt where resplendence
So lately sate.

Life is not the same, the live thunders leaped
From cloud to cloud, in the hour gone.
Now a sweet calm prevails o'er all the land,
And peace from conflict is reborn,
Life's storms abate.

Life is not the same; the strong emotions
That filled and thrilled its younger day
Come not as then, with impulse, bounding
Along the flowery pathway
We were speeding.

Life is not the same; the splendor and glow,
And the beauty of night and day,
Are fading and the sere leaves are falling
Adown the narrow way
We are treading.

Life is not the same; the days come and go,
With measured tread from year to year,
Leaving along Time's pathway, weal and woe,
And mingled pain and pleasure, dear,
For you and me.

Life is not the same; though smiles wreathe the brow
When chance brings us a pleasant hour,
We feel within our hearts 'tis but awhile
Ere it passes like a flower
At death's decree.

THREE SCORE AND TEN

The long, long years, with their nights and their days
The years bearing changes and strife;
The years that have brought me pleasure and pain,
And the lights and shadows of life,
Have gone back there to the vanishing past,
To the past where the mists are gray,
And a strange new year, that I do not know,
Is guiding my footsteps today.
As the years pass on, with their nights and days,
Over winding paths that are strange,
I follow, in faith, through the lights and shades,
Through the wonderland scenes of change;
I'm glad I've been with the years that are gone,
Through the nights and days that are past;
With courage and strength they have helped me along,
With a wealth of wisdom that's vast.
I have learned the sad, sweet lessons of life,
From the years of life's yesterday—
The lessons of peace and lessons of pain,
As I walked with them on the way.
But the years that walked with me yesterday
On the road that was smooth and straight,
Said nought of the long, steep hill, on the way
Of the road to the sunset gate,
And they told me not of the sunset clouds,
The clouds that are burnished with gold,
The clouds that repose at the sunset gate
When the last of the years is old.

A DREAM OF THE LONG AGO

O! take me again, to childhood's domain,
To scenes where I once loved to play,
Around the old home, again let me roam,
If but for an hour or day.
And rest 'neath the trees, while softly the breeze,
Whispers of the long, long ago,
Telling of the days and innocent ways
That, again, I never may know.
To the dear old home, my childhood's sweet home
Let me, O! let me go again.
Let me walk once more, in the paths of yore,
Where scenes of beauty still remain.
By the old fireside, there let me abide,
And feel its gen'rous warmth once more.
While in the sweet gloom of the dear old room
I'll dream of the far nevermore.
When life was a song and the days were long,
Measures of happiness to come,
And the moonlight soft, with the stars aloft,
Smiled down from the heavenly dome.
Sweet memories dear, in silence I hear,
Coming from the years that are gone,
When the world was bright and my heart was light
And burdens of life were unborn.

THE SEVERED TIE

O! how I wish I could see you again,
I wish I could hear your voice once more
I wish I could call back the days we've known
The days and hours of the beautiful yore
I wish I could see you as I did back there
When homeward you'd come in the ev'ning glow
Bearing your burdens of toil and of care
Sometimes of failure that I did not know.
I wish I could see you as through the long years
We walked with each other until that day
That day of gloom, when the sun ceased to shine
That day of sorrow when you went away.
I wish I could see you just once again
To hear your voice so gentle and low
As mingled with pain you'd beg me forbear
Words I had spoken that wounded you so
I would come to you and beg you forgive
The words I'd spoken but never did mean
I'd banish all pain I'd caused you my dear
And wreathe your face in the smiles I had seen.
O! I miss you as the hours pass slowly
While walking the path of life all alone
Through mists that are filled with sorrow and gloom
That gather about me since you have gone
But when the darkness and gloom seem deepest
I look up with hope to the starlit dome
And whisperings tell me I'll see you again
Where you are waiting to welcome me home.
Yes, I shall see you my darling again
As I did there in the dear long ago

In youth's bright morning when life was a song
And its beautiful strains ceased not to flow.
I'll see you again, it will not be long,
The evening shadows of life draw near
I cannot walk in the darkness alone
But God's hand will guide me, I shall not fear
Though severed the tie that bound us in life,
And though I am here, bereft of your care
God is guiding me to the sunset gates
And he will guide me to you over there.

THE DYING YEAR

Goodbye, old year, your time is up,
  Goodbye, forevermore.
Pleasure and pain you've scattered wide,
  As years have done before.
From one who had but one ewe lamb,
  Heedless, you took away.
From others with a thousandfold,
  You led not one astray.
Wounds you've opened that long were closed,
  And caused to bleed anew.
The veil of woe o'er hearts you've thrown,
  That once were brave and true.
To others in life's battles brought
  Freedom and peace and rest.
And filled with warmth of glowing love
  Many an empty breast.
To many you've closed the door of hope,
  And doomed to sorrow's night,
To myriad hearts, unstingingly,
  You've given radiant light.
You've crushed fond hopes and blighted hearts
  That pulsed with eager life
Others, you've raised from deep despair
  And freed from toiling strife.
Many you've clothed with want and pain,
  Many with hate and fear.
Others you've left a legacy
  Of joy and peace and cheer.
You've torn from mother's breast the babe
  That was her life, a part,

A budding life to others gave
That filled a lonely heart.
Abodes of congregated men.
With stern unfeeling force,
You've devastated ruthlessly,
In your relentless course.
Elsewhere you've brushed away the clouds
That hovered darkly near,
And sent sweet messengers of hope
To drive out every fear.
Your path, old year, is deeply marked,
With foul and bloody crimes,
That will descend on hist'ry's page
To distant after-times.
Your march has been o'er mangled forms,
And cries of woe, we've heard,
While tenderness and sympathy
Within our hearts were stirred.
But far into unfathomed depths,
You've delved with earnest care,
And brought forth to the sons of men
Rich gems of wisdom rare.
You've boldly searched mystérious realms,
For treasures hidden there,
And rent the veil that shut them in,
And laid their secrets bare.
You've gone back to the curtained past,
And turned the hidden sod,
Unfolding much that teaches man
That he's the child of God.
And higher on the upward way,

Than centuries before,
You've kindled beacon lights aloft,
To guide men evermore.
Goodbye, old year, your work is done,
And henceforth with the past,
You go, where all have gone before,
Where all must go at last.

RETROSPECTION

Tonight, a vision comes to me
As I sit in my room alone,
And hold before me a picture
Of the days and years that are gone.
Though dimmed by the glamour of age,
And scarred by its conflicts and strife,
The picture before me reveals
The roseate morning of life.
By the lamp of mem'ry that burns
In my heart with a loving glow,
I see the scenes of my youth-time
In the distant, long, long ago.
I see the fair playgrounds I loved
Made bare with my feet when a boy
When the hours were periods of peace,
And moments were measures of joy.
Back through the pleasures and sorrows,
Through shifting of smiles and of tears,
I catch a gleam of my childhood
In the hazy distance of years.
The dear old home with its treasure
Of memory, sweet and sublime,
Beams with a gentle effulgence
Down the lengthening aisles of Time.
O beautiful morning of youth,
When life was unclouded and free,
The sunshine was brighter than now,
And the birds sang sweetly to me.
Soft were the breezes, and laden
With fragrance from sweet flowers rare,

From lily and rose in the wildwood,
From blossoms on the landscape fair.
Dewdrops of fancy then sparkled
On flowers of fondest desire,
And siren songs from the future,
Ambition's bright dreams did inspire.
The voice of Hope that enticed me
From that beautiful long ago,
Still comes from out of tomorrow
Thru the sunset's deep'ning glow.

LIFE'S TWILIGHT

When youthful emotions weaken and wane
And joys of other days come not again;
When fades life's glory and glow and grace
And the moments are dull and commonplace,
It is the dark shading
Of light that is fading.

When golden moments, that were ours in trust,
Have joined the past and mingled with the dust;
When down the aisles of time, the speeding years,
Into the dark'ning distance, disappear,
It is receding day
Bearing the hours away.

When beauty by Time's fell hand, is defaced,
And pleasures of days, now gone, are effaced;
When youth's nectared wine its honey has lost
And life's wintry winds are laden with frost,
It is the ebbing breath
Whispering summer's death.

When young love's passions no longer command,
And we feel not as yore the clasp of the hand;
When the fires of youth are barely alive
And the loves we've known no longer survive,
It is life's sunlit day
Passing, passing away.

When we forget that the bright stars above,
To youthful hearts, are sentinels of love;

When silvery moonbeams reach not to the heart,
And love's sweet image stands, from us, apart,
We need not, then, be told,
That we are growing old.

When tender expressions no longer thrill,
And mem'ry of other days comes not at will;
When dull grows the charm of night and of day,
And life's winter begins showing the gray,
It is the dimming light
That warns of coming night.

When the hopes we've long cherished, are slain
And life's strong emotions come not again;
When mem'ry's jewels we no longer keep,
O! then, it is time for the heart to weep
For the days that have flown
And the years that are gone.

A PRAYER

Father of all mercy, wisdom and of love,
Destitute of worthiness, I kneel
In humility and penitence, to Thee;
Stoop, and hear a prodigal's appeal.

Thou knowest, Lord, my heart's weakness and its sin,
And temptations that doth encompass me
And urge my footsteps toward the downward way,
Into darkness, where I cannot see.

In my helplessness, I grope, take, Thou, my hand,
And guide me, for I cannot walk alone;
Gird, Thou, me, with Thine arm, lest I fall, again
Into sinful ways, to which I'm prone.

Too often, from Thy love, I have turned away,
Too oft, from the straight and narrow way
I have strayed, unmindful of the paths I trod,
When Thy gracious smiles illumed the way.

I have not leaned, in faith, on Thine outstretched arm,
When Thy blessings did encircle me,
Nor remembered, I, Thine all-sufficient love
In the days of my prosperity.

Father forgive me, forgive Thine erring, wayward child
Lead me back into that better way,

From which I have gone, into thorny paths;
Stay with me and guide me through life's day.

Guide me in righteousness, from temptation's way,
And deliver me from evil, free,
Forgive, Thou, my transgressions against Thy law,
As I forgive those who injure me.

Forgive me and cleanse my heart from ev'ry sin;
Give me courage to be brave and strong;
Help me, Thou, to bear Thy cross without complaint
And shun the inviting ways of wrong.

Clothe me in meekness, Lord, each day I may live,
Lest I upon my own weakness lean;
Redeem and make my life from all evil free;
Sanctify my heart and make it clean.

Grant, Thou, that mercy, in plentitude, to me,
That I, to my fellowman, may show;
Endow me with desire to forgive the wrong;
Let Thy love, through me, to others flow.

Help me, in sincerity, to others, do
That which I would have them do to me;
Make me my brother's keeper, in all that's good,
With gentle service—unselfishly.

From every malice and other evil thought,
Lead me, Thou, in mercy, far away,
And help me, in charity, and kindly deeds,
To serve my neighbor every day.

Teach, Thou, me, to feel the pain that others feel,
When wounded by evil's whetted knife;
Give me strength and love to lift the weights that bear
Heavily, upon my brother's life.

Thy suffering children, prompt Thou, me to seek
And soothe with love's sincere sacrifice;
Strengthen me to help them on the upward way
That leads to Thine all-sufficient peace.

If I am more blessed by Thy munificence,
Than are other children of Thy care,
It is because I'm Thy chosen Steward, Lord,
That, Thy blessing, to them I may bear.

Let me not find rest in luxury and ease,
While ghosts of hunger, Thy children haunt;
Forbid me, my appetites to satisfy,
While others, more worthy, are in want.

Let me forget, O Lord, all that self may wish
And trust Thee all the days I live;
Lord, continue, Thou, Thy bounty unto me,
As I, that bounty, may to others give.

WAR

I am the spirit of infernal chaos—
The raging demon of black despair.
I ride the mad steed of seething hate
O'er prostrate forms of
Love and peace.
I stir, with Venom's breath, the hot cauldron
Of wild Confusion.
And throw the dark mantle of dread sorrow
O'er sepulchers of human pleasure.
And drench the earth
With tears.
I wield the weapons of swift destruction
And exult in the misery of
Weeping mothers and
Helpless babes.
I laugh at ruined homes and desecrated altars
And revel 'midst the tombs of silence
That mark
Dead marts of trade.
I sing songs of joy when Goodness weeps,
And pierce the heart of Faith with the
Poisoned lance of Doubt.
I am the enemy of virtue—
The leech of immortal souls
And ghoul of human flesh,
Whereon I feast.
I paralyze the weak with chilling fear.
And dig deep the grave
Of simple hope.
O'er fields of buoyant life,
Death's juggernaut, I roll,

And drown the voice of prayer
In a sea of blood.
Evil is my arsenal and cruelty my aim;
I am the executioner of hell's decree;
Mercy hides her face and flees, in fear,
At my approach.
Churches fall and civilizations perish
At my command.
I am the unrelenting foe of love,
I scatter disease, on the wings of hate,
To throttle life.
I hurl men into a hurricane of death,
And rejoice while vultures feed on
Their putrid flesh.
I stab the innocent with foul pain,
And turn laughter to lunacy.
I yoke decrepit age with infancy
And drive them forth, upon
The unsheltered earth
To starve.
I invade the sanctity of peaceful homes
Where love is known, and
Turn mirth to misery,
And joy to sadness.
Battlefields are my playgrounds,
And the marks of sanguinary strife
My footprints.
Monuments of the ages, wherein man has wrought
Crumble and fall
At my touch.
I am the arch foe of heaven, and strike at the
Exalted throne of God.

I hate the lowly Nazarene
And scorn His gentle words;
I train my legions to destroy His rule of peace
While feeding the furious flames
Of vengeance
With the fagots of dead love.
I trample upon the hearts and hopes of all mankind
As I march to the goal of earth's
Complete damnation.
I am the prince of satanic fury,
Kings, Emperors and Rulers of the puny earth,
Are the puppets of my imperial will,
And serving me,
They simulate deep piety and claim the favor of
The most high God.
Clothed in the habiliments of base hypocrisy,
They stand before the multitude of unthinking men
And proclaim the approval of
The peace-loving Deity
In execution of my fiendish schemes
To hurl him from his throne,
And, this as willing servants,
They do for me, and call it glory.
The groping mass of senseless men
Believe the deep veiled lie
And turn, in frenzied wrath 'gainst the structure
Of brotherhood and charity, which
Through long ages, they
Have labored to erect,
And madly execute
Perdition's will.
Let infernal legions, now, come forth

And join with man in the furious maelstrom
Of death and destruction.
While Priest and Rulers urge them on
With pious prayers for my success.
Yea, imps of hell, come forth!
The sons of men are your willing allies, now;
The smoke of Fratricidal carnage
Shuts heaven from their view;
Join with them, while they revel in
Satanic chaos;
It is your hour of supremest joy,
And with you,
I REJOICE.

WOODROW WILSON

Great chieftain of a righteous cause
Defender of a Nation's rights
Servitor of the world's oppressed
Dispensing hope from Freedom's heights
Unmoved by selfish gain or fear
Thy trenchant lance of liberty
Unsheathed against the rule of might
Hath slain "divine right" fallacy
Henceforth no tyrant shall enslave
Or curb the ideals of the free,
No rights of man shall be impaired
By virtue of a king's decree.
Thy burning words in Freedom's name
Shall live through ages yet to come
Shall keep alive the fires of hope
In mansion and in cotter's home
A household word with glad acclaim
Thy name in all the world shall be
Where human aspirations strive
Great arbiter of liberty.

THE PIONEERS OF LIFE

Thank God for noble pioneers
Who carry beacon lights,
Along life's dark untrodden ways,
From vale to mountain heights.
Thank God for those who lead the charge
'Gainst tyrant Error's hosts,
And mark the conquered ways of Truth,
With Virtue's guiding posts;
Thank God for living stars whose rays
Pierce superstition's night,
And cheer the gloomy aisles of doubt
With intellectual light.
Thank God for brave, courageous lives
With high and dauntless aim,
Who rise above the mists of fear,
And dare great truths proclaim.
Thank God for those unselfish hearts
Who, loving service give,
In leading fallen mankind up
On higher planes to live.
Thank God for all who catch the beams
From love's eternal throne,
And light the darkened ways of life,
That man may cease to mourn.

ON THE DEATH OF THEODORE ROOSEVELT

Great American, thou hast fallen! hushed is thy
voice now,
Great friend of man, thy life is spent! 'neath sorrow's
pall we bow.
Great orator, thy forceful words will never more be
heard;
By thy lofty speech, great multitudes will not again
be stirred.
Great statesman of America, the land of Liberty,
A hundred million freemen will cease not to mourn
for thee.
Colossus, thou didst stride the world of all humanity,
And clasped the hands of honest men, whatever their
degree.
Gigantic mind, you soared aloft to ambition's dizzy
heights,
Yet kept thy place in battle line for freemen's sacred
rights.
Flaming Meteor! with fiery light, across the world
you came,
And with dynamic force you stirred mankind to
higher aim.
Stormy Petrel! thou didst revel in great battle storms
for right
And, dauntless, didst thy crusade wage 'gainst error's
threat'ning might.
A mighty nation's treasure; diamond in the world-
wide sky!
For duty, thou didst scale the peaks and write thy
name on high.

Great Patriot! thy name is linked with the wide world's history
And upon its brightest pages, all men shall read of thee.
Citizen of the World! but American to the core,
Thy name shall live on honor's roll 'til time shall be no more.
Husband, father, patriot, statesman, servitor of mankind,
Before the God of hosts, in grief, our heads are now inclined.

TWILIGHT

Birds now cease their merry lay
With the closing hour of day,
Gently comes the ev'ning breeze
Whisp'ring softly through the trees.
On the silent landscape, fair,
Undulating here and there,
Phantom pictures come and go
In the sunset's mellow glow.
Softened tints of ling'ring light,
Blend with shadows of the night.
In the azure depths, afar,
Twinkles one bright, smiling star.

GOODBYE

Goodbye, while on life's way we pressed,
Our pathways led together,
From life's fatigue, we paused for rest,
We met and loved each other.
Goodbye, our paths diverge today,
We go where they may lead us,
Though clouds or sunshine mark the way,
Let's bear sweet mem'ries with us.
Goodbye, 'tis always hard to say,
When pleasant ties are broken,
But duty calls—we must obey,
The sad word must be spoken.
Goodbye, Goodbye, we may not meet
Again this side Life's river,
But when we reach love's last retreat
We'll part no more forever.

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